



Federation
of Veterinarians
of Europe



Implementation of One Health in undergraduate education

*Doctors, dentists, pharmacists and veterinarians working together
from curricula to practice*

Warsaw, 4 December 2019

The European organisations representing medical doctors, dentists, pharmacists and veterinarians and their students' organisations held the 2nd open debate on the implementation of One Health¹ in undergraduate education on 4 December 2019 in Warsaw.

The event was hosted by the Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists and brought together more than 50 participants from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The objective was to encourage an open discussion and an exchange of views. Through presentation of existing experiences, the importance of developing a One Health culture in universities to enhance One Health collaboration in practice was highlighted.

The professional and student organisations representing medical doctors, dentists, pharmacists and veterinarians of Europe

call on national authorities, policy makers, academics, professionals and students to:

- ✓ update standard curricula to encompass and promote interdisciplinary education in university,
- ✓ train educators to encourage more interaction among students of different backgrounds,
- ✓ launch and support joint initiatives to further implement the One Health approach.

¹ www.onehealthinitiative.com/about.php

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Highlights

- ✓ Students should be given more opportunities to learn together and collaborate closer in practice. They are an active part of academia and must be considered as one of the main forces within universities for driving changes today. Moreover, the engagement of students with society can have an important impact.
- ✓ One Health is a concept to be integrated in the teaching of all subjects, clinical and non-clinical, in medical, dental, pharmaceutical and veterinary curricula.
- ✓ One Health requires the sharing of knowledge and experiences through inter-professional collaboration. Therefore, One Health education is about learning together, not about adding a new subject.
- ✓ Currently, the education of health professionals is organised in isolation in most academic establishments. However, the undisputed value of the One Health approach to tackle different challenges related to public, human and animal health (e.g. Antimicrobial resistance) leads to the need to establish interdisciplinary education. Experience gained from these models of education should be further investigated and promoted.
- ✓ There is a need for developing guidance on a common understanding and implementation of One Health in practice, as well as promoting interdisciplinary collaboration.
- ✓ Educators should be encouraged and trained to consider a different model of teaching that facilitates interdisciplinary interaction and education.

Conference detailed report

The conference “Implementation of One Health in Undergraduate Education” began with a warm welcome by **Ms Zadorożna** from the Ministry of Health of Poland and **Dr Lella** from the Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists.

Ms Zadorożna welcomed all the participants. In her short speech, she highlighted the importance of the One Health approach and invited the attendees to have fruitful discussions.

Dr Lella stressed that One Health is based on interdisciplinary collaboration and is a response to current global challenges, acknowledging links between human health, animal health and the environment. Dr Lella expressed that she is glad that all professions are involved in this project.

The organisers welcomed the participants and started the discussion by presenting an overview of the project, stressing the importance of it for all the health professions.

Dr Jacques de Haller, CPME Past President, highlighted that doctors recognise how fundamental interprofessional collaboration is to better understand and effectively tackle complex health problems. He conveyed the full commitment of the medical profession to act together with dentists, veterinarians and pharmacists to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment.

Dr Rens Van Dobbenburgh, FVE President, underlined that the veterinarian is very much at the centre of the One Health concept and plays a vital role within society as humans and animals share the same environment and face similar challenges. Thinking out of the box and creating links between different professions will enable a better understanding of interconnections and prepare future One Health professionals.

Mr Michal Byliniak, PGEU President, expressed the pharmacists’ strong interest in the implementation of One Health in practice. He particularly highlighted the ethical responsibility of all the professions to work towards that goal and educate students to respect and seek close collaboration with other professionals in the interest of their patients.

Dr Marco Landi, CED President, expressed the strong interest of the dental profession in promoting the One Health concept in practice and in the implementation of this attitude at university. He presented a summary of collaborative activities from past years, during which dentists have been one of the professions that started this debate, and called for all to continue working together.

Session 1: “Why is One Health important?”

The session was moderated by **Dr Rens Van Dobbenburgh**, FVE President, who invited representatives from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and academia to open the discussion by presenting their views and experiences.

Dr Dominique L Monnet, *European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)*, reflected on the European Commission’s One Health approach towards antimicrobial resistance, which strives to

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address the human and veterinary sectors together in a holistic and coordinated approach to tackle the issue. He elaborated on how ECDC works together with other European Agencies, namely EMA and EFSA, on surveillance and analysis of data in a One Health approach, as well as on human-animal models that can be very useful in understanding antimicrobial resistance patterns and mechanisms. Dr Monnet concluded that all professionals, including healthcare professionals, need to implement the One Health approach in their professional work and learn how to collaborate, as prevention and control of antimicrobial resistance and prudent use of antibiotics is everyone's responsibility.

Dr Lucie Pokludova, *Institute for State Control of Veterinary Biologicals and Medicines in Brno, Czech Republic*, continued the reflection on the implementation of One Health, presenting the diverse opportunities it provides in nearly every aspect of human and animal health practice, such as disease prevention, treatment, epidemiology, management of hospitals, management of community practices, professional ethics and research. She underlined the responsibility that academic establishments have to prepare all health professionals for working efficiently across different disciplines by educating both the trainers and the students how to do it.

Session 2: “How to implement “One Health” in undergraduate education?”

The session was moderated by **Dr Jacques de Haller**, CPME Past President, who invited three academics from the Visegrád region to share their experiences of the implementation of One Health education in university.

Dr Mercedes Linninger, *Faculty of Dentistry, Semmelweis University in Budapest, Hungary*, presented on how interdisciplinarity has been implemented in this academic establishment since the beginning of the last century. Semmelweis University now has 6 faculties which closely collaborate together in education and research, and is currently reflecting on the expansion of similar close collaboration with academic establishments beyond healthcare, in areas such as law, economics and IT.

Prof Dr Jana Mojzisova, *University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Kosice, Slovakia*, presented another example of implementation of interdisciplinary collaboration. UVMP offers five different healthcare study programmes and implements interdisciplinary education and research. Several areas provide opportunities for such exchange among the different students provided that these students have the same level of knowledge as a starting point, which is ensured via the implementation of the same entrance exams for all of them. Prof Dr Mojzisova concluded that implementation of One Health in undergraduate education is about learning together and not about learning something else.

Dr Olga Rostkowska, *Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists and PhD student at Medical University of Warsaw, Poland*, presented her insights as a professional and student. Dr Rostkowska underlined that students are not only the future of the profession, but can also drive the change of today. Implementation of the One Health approach in education requires thinking outside the box, breaking the rules of the classroom, reaching out to our colleagues, engaging with the society, introducing new systems of learning, like e-learning, making the study environment more interactive and engaging, developing open communication, respecting other healthcare professionals and having the courage to drive change.

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