

The need for leadership skills development among health sector executives in Lithuania

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The EU LEPHIE project has developed a competency framework for an effective leadership in public health area (Czabanowska, 2013). The framework consists of 52 competencies organized into eight domains. The aim of this study was to evaluate the need for leadership skills among health care sector based on proposed framework.

The data was collected in a cross-sectional study, in 2015. Questionnaires were distributed to all executives of Lithuanian public health institutions and heads of municipality health administrations (N = 180). Response rate -55%. Respondents were asked to evaluate competencies from two perspectives – “current level of leadership competencies” and “the required level of leadership competencies for your current job position”. Competencies were evaluated using Likert scale from 1 (minimal competencies) to 5 (maximum competencies).

Findings suggest that respondents evaluated their competencies positively, but estimated that they required a higher level of competence than they currently possessed. Maximum, mean and standard deviation scores for the current and required level of competencies are as follows: systems thinking (35; 24.75 ± 4.85 vs. 30.88 ± 4.51); political leadership (40; 27.46 ± 60.5 vs. 35.62 ± 5.02); collaborative leadership - building and leading interdisciplinary teams (25; 17.73 ± 3.87 vs. 22.00 ± 3.47); leadership and communication (35; 26.03 ± 5.14 vs. 31.19 ± 4.89); leading change (30; 21.48 ± 4.50 vs. 26.43 ± 4.77); emotional intelligence and leadership in team-based organizations (30; 23.29 ± 4.25 vs. 26.74 ± 4.26); leadership, organizational learning and development (35; 26.37 ± 5.71 vs. 30.85 ± 5.77) and ethics and professionalism (30; 24.09 ± 3.97 vs. 27.33 ± 4.11).

Findings suggested that executives see a gap between their current and required leadership competencies. This suggests the need of further leadership development. This competency framework can be a blueprint for organizing capacity building training for health leaders in Lithuania and beyond.

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