

PSYCHIATRICS & MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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# MODERN SYSTEM OF MEDICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT OF INTERNS AT THE STAGE OF POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** The study deals with the assessment of individual-personal and socio-psychological factors, mechanisms and conditions for psychological adaptation of interns for professional activity. The authors distinguished objective and subjective criteria of the interns' adaptation efficiency to professional activity. A high level of maladaptation was detected in 9.2% of male and 12.5% of female interns; severe level of maladaptation in 10.3% of male and 14.0% of female interns; a moderate level of maladaptation in 36.2% and 42.1%, respectively. According to the findings medical interns were found to have such clinical and psychological manifestations of adaptation disorders as asthenic (25.5%), hyperesthetic (21.6%), depressive (16.2%), psychosomatic (14.2%), astheno-apathic (11.4%), addictive (11.1%) types of maladaptive reactions. The findings were used to elaborate a system of medical and psychological support for physicians at the stage of postgraduate education with a differentiated use of a set of psychotherapeutic methods and psychoeducation, reflecting formation mechanisms of the disorders of adaptation to the professional activity of doctors.

**KeyWords:** psychological adaptation, professional activity, maladjustment, psychotherapy, psychoeducation.



## INTRODUCTION

Postgraduate education is a specialized improvement in education and professional training aimed at extension, development and update of professional knowledge, skills and abilities, or obtaining another specialty on the basis of previous qualification and practical experience [1, 2].

Changes in higher medical education and its integration into the European educational sphere require a new approach to postgraduate training for physicians. Under current conditions the main objectives of postgraduate education for physicians are both to improve professional training of interns and to provide medical and psychological support to physician during adaptation to professional activities [3, 4].

The problem of professional development is one of the most challenging problems of psychological science. And not only because it is a complex and very broad topic, but also because different views on this process are complementary and greatly deepen scientific ideas on psychological nature of not only professional formation, but also on personal development [5, 6].

One of the most important educational tasks of postgraduate education institutes is work with interns for quicker and more successful adaptation of their professional activities to a new system of social relations [7, 8].

The study of adaptation is the subject of research both of natural and social sciences and is an important area of research on the verge of various branches of knowledge, such as physiology, psychology, pedagogy, ecology, medicine, social psychology, etc. Each of these sciences are peculiar to our own understanding regarding the allocation of substantial emphasis, specific study of the processes of adaptation and maladaptation in all spheres of life making high demands on resources and psycho-physiological adaptation reserves. Professional activities of a doctor are characterized by increased stress related to work in terms of increased intellectual and psycho-emotional stress, lack

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of time and information, high level of responsibility [9, 10, 11].

The abovementioned points out the necessity of the development and evaluation of an up-to-date system of medical and psychological support for interns in conditions of adaptation to professional activity in order to prevent maladaptive states.

## **2 PURPOSES, SUBJECTS and METHODS:**

**2.1 Purpose** was to study specific signs of psychological maladaptation of interns during professional training and medical and psychological support during professional specialization training.

### **2.2 Subjects & Methods**

In order to achieve this goal, we carried out a comprehensive medical psychological and psychodiagnostic examination of 256 doctors-interns of Kharkiv National Medical University, both sexes, aged 23-30 years, in compliance with the principles of bioethics and deontology.

Psychodiagnostic method included the use of "Evaluation of Occupational Maladjustment" questionnaire (A. N. Rodina, 1995, adapted by M. A. Dmitrieva, 1997), Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (M. Hamilton, 1967), adapted to ICD-10 (G. P. Panteleyev, 1988) (HDRS) and quality of life assessment using the questionnaire developed by H. Mezzich, Cohen, Ruiperez, Liu & Yoon, 1999 in the modification of N. A. Maruta, 2004; scales determining the level of anhedonia SHAPS (Snaith-Hamilton Pleasure Scale, 1995).

### **Conflict of interests**

There is no conflict of interests.

## **3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings showed a high level of maladaptation requiring the use of urgent measures (psychological and medical) in 2.3% of the interns under investigation; severe level of maladaptation, requiring mandatory psychological intervention and rehabilitation in 10.1%; a moderate level

of maladaptation, with advisory medical support in 26.2%.

At the same time, women were found to have a higher level of adaptation disorders during their professional activity, as compared to men.

Clinical manifestations of anxiety were detected in 15.8% of the examined women, as compared to 7.2% of men. Subclinical manifestations of anxiety were observed in 16.3% and 15.5%, respectively. Clinical manifestations of depression were typical for 2.4% of women and 1.4% of men, and subclinical manifestations of depression for 20.1% and 16.0%, respectively.

According to our findings, medical interns were found to have such maladaptive reactions as asthenic (25.5%), hyperesthetic (21.6%), anxiety-depressive (16.2%), psychosomatic (14.2%), astheno-apathic (11.4%) and addictive (11.1%). Asthenic type, characterized by asthenic component, both physical and mental, reduces the capacity and interest in the external environment, persistent fatigue and weakness. Hypersthenic type is a tendency to transient or prolonged affective reactions, increased sensitivity to previously neutral stimuli. Anxiety-depressive type is characterized by effeminate background affecting mood and involving sadness, groundless anxiety with inability to relax, frustration. Psychosomatic type is manifested by the development of psychosomatic diseases. Astheno-apathetic type is manifested by fatigue, weakness, exhaustion, inactivity, indifference, lack of interest in communication secondary to depressed state, irritability, apathy. Addictive type is characterized by excessive consumption of alcohol, narcotic and toxic substances, gradual loss of situational control when taking psychoactive substances, as well as formation of different non-chemical types of addiction.

In accordance with the established features of adaptation disorders development in interns, we have developed and tested a system of medical and psychological support of interns at the postgraduate education stage, which includes personality-oriented psychotherapy (B. D. Karvasarsky, G. L. Insurina, V.A. Tashlykiv, 1994), individual and group cognitive-behavioral therapy (A.T. Beck, 2006), rational psychotherapy (classic version by P. Dubois 1912).

Psycho-educational work occupies an important place in

the system of medical and psychological support (N.O. Maruta, G.M. Kozhina, V.I. Korosty, 2010, 2011), which includes the use of informational modules, trainings for positive self-perception, increase of involvement, formation of communicative skills, solving problems of interpersonal interaction and problem-oriented discussions.

Evaluation of the system for medical and psychological support showed improvement in the emotional state in 83.8% of the surveyed with adaptive disorders, an increase in social and professional functioning (66.2%), and an increase in the quality of life index on all scales, which indicated a high efficiency of the proposed system for medical and psychological support of interns at the stage of postgraduate education.

The obtained data concerning adaptation disorders in doctors related to their professional activity correlate with data provided by Ukrainian scientists, but their attention is more closely focused on adaptation disorders in physicians who work in the specialty for more than 5 years. The results of the study allowed us to expand and supplement existing scientific ideas on adaptation of doctors to professional activity on the model of doctors-interns.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, according to the results of the study the period of adaptation to professional activity in interns was characterized by asthenic (25.5%), hyperesthetic (21.6%), anxiety-depressive (16.2%), psychosomatic (14.2%), asthenopathic (11.4%), addictive (11.1%) types of maladaptive reactions, with clinical manifestations determining the specifics of psychotherapeutic intervention and medical and psychological support.

The system of medical and psychological support of interns at the postgraduate education stage should include the use of personality-oriented psychotherapy, individual and group cognitive-behavioral therapy, rational psychotherapy and psycho-education.

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Received: 01-Aug. - 2017

Accepted: 27-Sep. - 2017