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PRESS RELEASE

For eleven months, the Department of Biochemistry and Biotechnology of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University has been implementing a cross-border project “Personalized prevention tools in obesity and diabetes – a joint Romanian-Ukrainian programme of health education (PrePOD)”, EMS ENI Code 2SOFT/4.1/56 that is implemented under the Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 "Support for the development of medical services and access to health care " and is funded by the European Union. Stefan cel Mare University (Suceava) is a partner from Romania.

The total budget of the project is 329,200 EUR/11,328,263 UAH, of which 296,280 EUR/10,195,437 UAH (90%) is the contribution of the Joint Operational Program Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 and 32,920 EUR/1,132,826 UAH (10%) is the contribution of both partners: Stefan cel Mare University (Suceava, Romania) and Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine).

The aim of the project is to raise public awareness of risk factors associated with overweight, obesity, and diabetes, screening of adults and children in their communities, and providing personalized counseling for them. The second aim of the project is to engage local health providers in providing nutrition counseling and education in a primary care setting in a Romanian/Ukrainian population. The project goal is to reduce the spread of obesity and diabetes in Ukraine and Romania.

During the project implementation, both parties performed a number of activities provided by the program. In particular:

- established local contacts with primary care workers, school headmasters, and administrations of territorial communities (for Ukraine – Burshtyn town, villages Pijlo, Tysmenychany, and Stetseva) to further screen their population for overweight, obesity, and diabetes;
- developed a project website (<http://www.prepod.org.ua/>), that contains bilingual information and materials for the population, clinicians, and scientists involved in the project. The web page content is updated on a regular basis;
- developed and produced educational information materials for the population and clinicians;

to be continued



The Joint Operational Programme Romania-Ukraine 2014-2020 is financed by the European Union through the European Neighbourhood Instrument and co-financed by the participating countries in the Programme.

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by the European Union

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their knowhow, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

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- purchased a vehicle (car) and all the necessary equipment with supplies that allow performing the screening campaigns, measuring health outcomes, and processing the data collected from the screened general population (adults and children) in selected target local communities;
- trained staff and students (83 people from Ukraine and 68 people Romania) in measuring health indicators and collecting information during a screening of target groups; they have been instructed on how to perform data collection and interpretation, entry, analysis and graphing using current software, compile an integrated report and present the results;
- examined the attitudes about, and perceived barriers of nutrition counseling/education of 62 health providers;
- provided nutrition counseling and nutrition education training (a two one-day seminars for health providers was held at the "Reikartz Park Hotel Ivano-Frankivsk" in Ukraine with the participation of Romanian partners and renowned Ukrainian scientists and practitioners working in the fields of clinical biochemistry, endocrinology, and nutrition). Generally, 106 health providers have been trained.

The identification of individuals from general population target groups (adults and school-age children) with undiagnosed prediabetes and/or diabetes/overweight/obesity in selected target areas is planned for September 2021 by on-site screening, nutrition counseling, and education using the mobile clinic "Health on Wheels". A number of awareness-raising public campaigns for the general public on the risks of obesity, diabetes, and healthy eating will be conducted through the media, brochures/leaflets, and personalized health feedback and counseling, which should further reduce the risk of overweight, obesity, and diabetes development in the population.

Both teams from Romania and Ukraine work complementary. Such cooperation in the future will provide insight into the current situation of obesity and diabetes type 2 in the Ukraine-Romania cross-border regions and will help to make science-based decisions by project researchers in order to slow down the growth of morbidity in these areas and recommendations for doctors and the general public.

THE END

Contact person: professor, Ph.D. Volodymyr Lushchak

Functional responsibilities: project manager

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