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Strengthening core competences and skills of medical and public health students for digital health

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Background:
Innovations and use of modern IT approaches are important for new generation of health professionals, in particular for strengthening their core competences on health protection, public health emergencies, preparedness and response. Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, Palacký University Olomouc (UPOL), Czech Republic, one of the full ASPHER members, implemented in medical as well as public health curricula new topics focused on digital health in general, in particular on provision of health services in the time of health emergencies.

Objectives:
- To strengthen competences and skills of medical students in the area of digital health with a special focus on health protection.
- To train students in using modern IT approaches.
- To strengthen methodology for retrospective evaluation of surveillance data with an emphasis on updating crisis management for human health within the system of epidemiological alertness.

Results:
New module on digital health was developed and successfully tested in all education programmes at the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic: General Medicine (Czech and English programmes), Dentistry (Czech and English programmes) and Public Health (Czech programme). New module has blended learning structure based on combination of face-to-face seminars and exercises with e-learning parts, including self-assessment. New module will be presented in details.

Conclusions:
This new education module fully supports international recommendations to strengthen digital health competences and skills of medical as well as public health students. This new approach is an integral part of the pilot project on further development and implementation of digital health in the Czech health system, managed by the University Hospital Olomouc. COVID-19 pandemic confirms how important this new approach is for all health professionals.

Key messages:
- Improving competences and skills of medical as well as public health students in digital health is crucial.
- Using digital health in the area of health protection, preparedness and response is important for prediction and its use in epidemiological alertness.

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