

THE ROLE OF SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING IN CHOOSING THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

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Abstract: The paper emphasizes the importance of implementing counselling activities among young people at the age of formulating options for the future profession. We discuss general issues related to the role of interests and skills in the medical profession, also the importance of knowing the market characteristics in the medical field and the risk-assuming level. The paper details the most common models of options in choosing a profession and their degree of success depending on the compatibility or incompatibility of the medical profession's content and candidate's personality structure. At the end of the article we present an excerpt from an information material for adolescents of Sibiu County and neighbouring counties within an institutional promotion campaign.

Cuvinte cheie: orientare profesională, interes, aptitudini, medicină

Rezumat: Lucrarea subliniază importanța implementării activităților de consiliere profesională în rândul tinerilor aflați la vârsta formulării opțiunilor pentru viitoarea profesie. Sunt discutate aspecte generale legate de rolul intereselor și aptitudinilor în alegerea profesiei medicale, precum și importanța cunoașterii caracteristicilor pieței muncii în domeniul medical și al nivelului de asumare a riscului. Lucrarea detaliază cele mai frecvente modele de opțiuni în alegerea profesiei, precum și gradul lor de succes funcție de compatibilitatea sau incompatibilitatea dintre conținutul profesiei medicale și structura de personalitate a candidatului. În finalul articolului este prezentat un extras dintr-un material informativ destinat adolescenților din jud. Sibiu și județele limitrofe în cadrul unei campanii de promovare instituțională.

Each individual chooses his/her profession as a result of a complex system of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that define his/her interests and emerge from the natural tendency towards self-accomplishment. Within the complex and dynamic mechanism of the professional success, in addition to the role played by the educational system and the labour market, personal factors also occur (satisfaction related to the graduated school, the workplace corresponding to each one's needs, choosing the career or the specialisation each of us has the necessary skills and abilities for, the extent to which the career or the workplace allows the young man to remark himself and, last but not least, the ability of everyone to stand out in the workplace).

Choosing the profession is the first step in career building, in the sense of all professions, occupations, roles and functions that a person has in life, not only in the professional field. The reasons for choosing a specific profession may have, especially in adolescence, a vague and fluctuating character, strongly paralyzed by the emotional side and the entourage. By accepting the role of changing as a prerequisite for progress, it becomes imperatively necessary that the generations at the age of choosing profession to be prepared for the future, to be confident in their strength, creative, flexible and adaptable.

The need for assisted career guidance appeared in all civilized countries as a common denominator of the need to increase economic efficiency by selecting the appropriate human resources, and of the need for personal development along with the societal development.

After 1990, our country has made great steps at government level to recognize the role of the socio-professional

guidance in career choosing. However, this field is not yet a priority for the education policy. There is no coherent system of career guidance to benefit from a legal framework, proper human and material resources in order to develop such an activity.

In Romania, the teenagers of the last two decades are put in difficulty in terms of orientation to the medical profession as a result of rapid and irreversible economic and social transformations in this sector: rapid diversification of the areas of the medical activity, rapid changes in the medical staff skills required on the labour market, overcrowd of the medical schools in the detriment of other professions, changing conditions in exercising the medical profession, rapid development of information and transfer of information in the field, the need for continuous professional training and the need to acquire new skills. Although graduates of the higher medical education represent a highly qualified labour force, this field is not required on the labour market. On the other hand, the academic medical education still has a predominantly theoretical character and the academic curricula are less flexible to the market demands.

The persistence of the “patriarchal model” in choosing profession, insufficiently motivated and adapted young doctors in terms of self-will, personality and skills choose this profession. On the other hand, the “find one's legs” mentality chases away from the medical profession, the young with intellectual performance and aptitudes. The failure in career choosing in what regards the medical profession leads to the loss of investments of all kinds, both for the young (primarily, inefficient financial and time investment and intellectual,

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emotional investment) and society (financial, time investment and imbalances in providing human resource in other areas).

Career counselling in the medical field is a long learning process that should begin early in the student's life and should pay equal influence to each of its determinants: teenager, school, family, the media. A counselling process that leads to success must take into account the following: adolescent psychosomatic compatibility with the medical profession (personal capacity should meet the professional requirements); detailing the benefits of the profession, the role of the social image of the medical profession in relation to the expectations and socio-cultural profile of the adolescent); possibilities offered on the labour market, and the level of risk taking.

Starting from the premise that an institutional and personal development cannot be complete and stable unless based on the correlation between skills and individuals' interests with the chosen profession, we decided to organize an information campaign on the content of the medical profession. The target population of this campaign consists of students aged 14-18 years old, at the career choice age. The campaign will run from May to June 2013, in the secondary schools of Sibiu County and surrounding counties, according to the principle of geographical accessibility. The campaign will be conducted within a comprehensive institutional promotion project of the "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu and aims at raising awareness about the educational offer of the institution. The information campaign will include actions like workshops, roundtables, psychometric assessment, distribution of informative materials. The information is provided in a concise and accessible form through an interactive technique to stimulate the interest for self-knowing and:

- § ***Make sure that the option to become a doctor is yours and not of the entourage.*** The motivation for this choice must come from within yourself. Explanations like "my parents are doctors", "doctors are respected by everybody", "it's a well paid job", "I want to prove that I am capable of doing this" do not represent solid reasons and will not be a real support when facing a higher workload and huge responsibilities to other professions.
- § ***Are you prepared to face a very intense training programme and a high workload?*** Preparing for the medical profession has the longest training duration within higher education worldwide.
- § ***Are you ready to sacrifice much of your free time to prepare for classes or to participate in overtime to deepen the study material and to pass the exams?***
- § ***Are you sure that you have enough material resources to get you bibliographic materials necessary to ensure a proper training or to pay the tuition fees?***
- § ***Are you able to touch (to examine) a corpse?*** If the answer to this question is "no", you surely should rethink your choice.
- § ***Are you prepared to take decisions that can change someone's life?*** We all know that the doctor "holds in his hands the patient's life" and, as such, he/she is often put in a position to take difficult decisions that can completely change the patient's life. The overall responsibility for these decisions falls to the doctor, answering in front of the vocational civil and even criminal courts for the decisions he/she has taken.
- § ***How do you usually handle the stressful situations?*** To live occasionally a stressful life situation means something, and to daily work under stress is something else. Starting with the first year of medical

disciplines, with the complexity and the sheer volume of knowledge, with the exams requirements, competitions for choosing a specialty residency, those for obtaining the title of medical specialist, job competitions, competitions for obtaining medical and scientific degrees and titles and ending with the physician daily put in a position to make the best choice for his/her patient, is probably the most suggestive example of several stressors that will accompany the candidate throughout his/her entire professional life.

- § ***Do you have good memory?*** In order to memorise all the theoretical and practical concepts that you need to practice as a doctor you need an exceptional memory. The diagnosis that you will make is based on the synthesis of information from various disciplines you studied during the faculty of medicine or residency.
- § ***Have you ever imagined how is it to work with sick people everyday?*** To put a diagnosis of a particular disease and to choose the best treatment is a laborious process both for the doctor and the patient. A physician cannot be indifferent to the patient's sufferance. The professional standards, the ethics and the conscience oblige the doctor to be sensitive to the patient's pain, to professionally and to a certain extent, to emotionally participate in this suffering to alleviate it. So, we cannot speak of "routine" in this profession.
- § ***Does your family allow you to wait a long time until you can bring financial support?*** If your family has financial problems and expect your help as soon after finishing high school, then surely the medical profession will increase the family difficulties, rather than alleviate them: support (including the costs of the rental) the purchase of books for study, the costs of exams and competitions mandatory after graduation, low salary during residency and the uncertain period of time until finding a job are all reasons to ask for material support from your family

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