



MEETING OF DIRECTORS OR REPRESENTATIVES
OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Agenda Item No. 4

THE HIGH INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH
STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENTS IN PUBLIC HEALTH TEACHING
SINCE THE CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH
FROM THE AFRICA; EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND
WESTERN PACIFIC REGIONS OF WHO, MANILA IN 1967

by

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The High Institute of Public Health is an autonomous unit of the University of Alexandria. It offers post-graduate studies and training in Public Health and its related fields, with the objective of preparing personnel, whether medical or paramedical, required for public health projects and teaching in UAR and other countries.

Additionally, research is carried out in various aspects of Public Health with the purpose of participating and assisting in Public Health Services at the consultation level.

Since 1956 the High Institute of Public Health started its actual work by giving a two-year programme of study leading to the degree of Master in Public Health, and an additional follow-up programme of two years leading to the degree of Doctor of Public Health. However, in 1961, the programmes of study in the High Institute of Public Health were altered to a one-year programme leading to the degree of Diploma in Public Health.

In 1969 it was found necessary to re-modify the programmes of study in the High Institute of Public Health to provide for all the post-graduate degrees of Diploma in Public Health, Master in Public Health, majoring in a special branch and Doctor in Public Health, in any branch of the field of Public Health.

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These degrees are to be offered by the High Institute of Public Health; studies should be supervised by the departments of the Institute which comprise Biostatistics, Microbiology, Public Health Administration (with all its branches, including: Health Administration and Medical Care, Maternal and Child Care, School Health, Health Education, Hospital Administration and Nursing), Nutrition and Food Hygiene, Occupational Health, Epidemiology, Environmental Health (including Environmental Health, Sanitary Chemistry and Public Health Engineering) and Tropical Public Health (including Medical Parasitology, Entomology, Vector Control, Rural Health and Tropical Health).

Regarding the planned programmes of study leading to both the Diploma and the degree of Master in Public Health, the High Institute of Public Health now provides for a core-course comprising six basic fields in Public Health.

This core-course is compulsory for all students preparing for their chosen post-graduate degree; the first field of the core-course covers information and knowledge about medical care, public health administration, genetics, maternal and child care, school health, health education and social sciences, occupational health, nutrition and food hygiene.

The second field of the core-course covers the theoretical and practical principles of biostatistics while the third covers that of epidemiology and the methods of epidemiological research and surveys.

The fourth field covers the academic as well as technical practice of environmental health, and the fifth deals with microbiology.

The last of these basic fields covers, theoretically and practically, medical parasitology.

This core-course is given distributively in twenty-three hours per week during the first semester.

Additionally, there is a course that deals with the practical and theoretical elements of anatomy and physiology and it is specially planned for the non-medicals. Furthermore, there is a special orientation course to be chosen by the supervising departments in accordance with the majoring specialization of each student.

Special courses are given according to the speciality required, during the second semester.

The period of study for the Diploma is forty-six weeks, divided into two academic semesters each lasting for eighteen weeks, five weeks for the field training of which the first ten days are specified for training co-operatively in a field project (research-cum-action) previously planned for and approved of by the Board of the Institute. The rest of the period devoted for training is for special training of students each in his field of specialization.

The rest of the weeks is for the mid-year vacation which usually takes two weeks and for the preparation for the comprehensive and final examinations.

Modifying the programmes of study was executed in respect to the required needs. The 1-year programme of study leading to the Diploma in Public Health was found to be necessary for the personnel attached to the field of Public Health whether in the Ministry of Public Health or any other governmental agency in need of such personnel.

The short period of one year did suit very much the governmental agencies as its objective is to promote the scientific level as well as the adequate practical application of the standards taught to the personnel involved.

Additionally, the requisites to register for a Diploma in Public Health do not specify any special estimate regarding the university graduation level required for registration.

This gives a vast chance for selection to all personnel working in the Public Health Field. On the other hand, the governmental agencies usually do not approve of the idea to dispose of some of the employees for more than one year.

Furthermore, when it comes to be more than one year, the regulations for selection get to be more complicated.

Here, the case becomes different as regards the number of registrees. The university regulations do not just permit anyone to register for the M.P.H. degree unless he fulfils all the necessary requirements, i.e. a university graduation with an estimate not less than "Good", and a 2-Years programme of study in the Institute with a previous two years period of experience in a job related to Public Health. These requisites do not usually suit the governmental agencies. Relatively this limits the number of the students enrolled for the degree of Master in Public Health. Additionally, those who acquire their M P.H. are entitled by law to a financial bonus to be paid monthly to the graduate provided that he takes over a job suitable for his new qualification. Due to such restrictions, the number of those to be enrolled for the degree of Master in Public Health will be limited and will almost be confined especially to those willing to perform academic work such as the instructors in the various departments of the Institute or the faculties of the universities.

Master of Public Health (M P.H.). This is a two-~~years~~ programme and a dissertation is required. It contains the basic courses of the DPH plus advanced courses in the field of specialization. This course extends over two years and is more advanced than the DPH. It is designed to qualify graduates for senior responsibilities in planning, administration and research but falls short as a qualification for academic career. The nomenclature here might be misleading because the similar degree offered by the American Institutions does not require special studies nor a dissertation. This programme, however, has been introduced to meet the requirements of the governmental departments in the Ministries of Health, Scientific Research, Social Welfare and Labour as well as the private institutions.

Doctor of Public Health, candidates who qualify for this programme are those who have special standing in their academic career are holders of DPH or MPH. The requirements of the degree are two years, include advanced courses after DPH or MPH and a thesis accepted by the Board of Examiners. The degree qualifies the candidate for a teaching career with all the responsibilities attached to it.

The objective of preparing an additional 2-Years programme of study leading to the degree of Doctor of Public Health is to have at hand, staff members specialized as consultants in Public Health projects as well as teaching staff for the future generations.

To complete the value of the academic studies attended, the High Institute of Public Health arranged for the students to have their practical training at certain training centres related to their fields of specialization. Such centres comprise the M.C.H. centres, the school health units, the health inspection offices, the malaria and snail control centres, the rural health centres, the fevers hospital, the general public health laboratories, the public health engineering centre, the general water-works co-operation, and the various industrial factories dispersed around Alexandria.

There is an arrangement that the students in the High Institute of Public Health can be trained and perform research work any time throughout the year at these training centres. On the other hand, the administration of these agencies co-operate wholeheartedly with the Institute, as they all believe in the value of such training for public health personnel.

Naturally, this system of training does not conflict with the pre-planned programme of training for five consecutive weeks before the final examinations.

In addition to the three programmes of study given by the Institute, there are short-term training courses that comprise refreshing courses and field training to personnel involved in public health, whether or not, highly qualified.

Such courses are held for technicians, sanitarians as well as graduated candidates working with the Governmental agencies. Such personnel are sent to the Institute for a period of three months to refresh their knowledge with the purpose of promoting their standard of work. To those, no official certificates are offered.

As a practical application for the academic knowledge acquired, the Institute issues some sort of a health bulletin edited co-jointly by the staff members as well as the students. This health bulletin is distributed among the locality at a nominal price. The objective of this project is to acquaint the laymen, as well as the educated, with the different public health problems to which they are subjected, and at the same time to give the best solution possible for such problems. Additionally, sound advice comprising suggestions to prevent or minimize such problems from occurring are also presented. This gives the student the incentive and urge to read and write professionally thus enlarging his knowledge and increasing his experience on the subject of his major field of specialization.

Before ending this statement, the High Institute of Public Health body would like to express their opinion regarding the recommendations of the Manila conference in 1967 concerning the establishment of an Association for the Schools of Public Health in the WHO regions of the Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, South East Asia, and Western Pacific. Such an Association will be of great help to all the joining members as it will act as the missing link between the staff members in the joining schools. Furthermore, it will be of utmost value regarding the supplies and equipment of which some of the schools are deprived due to the currency restrictions. Additionally, this Association will create a golden opportunity for the exchange of visitors among the staff members as well as the chance for the students to train in various atmospheres, if possible, in the field of Public Health and not confine their training to their localities, more chances for exchange of programmes as well as references will be available through this Association the day it comes out to light, a thing which we all recommend wholeheartedly.