

RECENZII

SANOCREATOLOGY OR SOME NEW APPROACHES
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH ?

Our commentary is the result of acquaintance with the monograph “Health Problems: Sano-creatology: The Need for Society in Its Development” [1], which is claimed by its authors as the first volume of the multivolume “Treatise on the Scientific and Practical Basis of Sano-creatology” and to some extent it can be regarded as Review of this work.

It is known that current Public health incorporates the *interdisciplinary* approaches of *epidemiology*, *biostatistics* and *health services*. *Environmental health*, *community health*, *behavioral health*, *health economics*, *public policy*, *mental health* and *occupational safety and health* are other important subfields [2]. The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies core functions of public health programs, such as combating with some communicable and non-communicable diseases including HIV/AIDS, diabetes, CVD. In the USSR, the academic discipline “Social Medicine and Health Care Management” was taught to students of medical schools, but the practice associated with it had systemic shortcomings (undemocratic management, unnecessary secrecy or deliberate distortion of public health information, ignoring epidemiological and biostatistical methods already developed in other countries).

It is quite possible that as a result of dissatisfaction with the practice of the organization of public health services and the outdated discourse of social medicine in the late USSR, two competing alternatives to such a discourse - sanology [3] and valeology [4] emerged, the latter in some post-Soviet countries (Russia, Belarus, some parts of Ukraine) was declared a separate scientific and academic discipline. Unfortunately, despite such academic legitimization, the discourse of valeology began to be filled not with lifestyle modification recommendations tested by Evidence Based Medicine methods, but with exposition of some exotic esoteric ideas and practices. In 1999, 140 scientific and religious figures of the Russian Federation signed an open letter to the Minister of Education of the Russian Federation, criticizing valeology. The letter was signed by academicians of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, including the president of the last. Valeology is also criticized by philosophers, noting the ungroundedness of its ideological claims. The teaching of valeology in the Russian Federation was suspended, but not completely discontinued, remaining in some universities. Joining criticism of valeology, scientists from the Academy of Sciences of Moldova offer their version of the science of health: Sano-creatology (meaning creation of health), which “is designed to prevent premature general biological degradation of modern man”[1]. Familiarity with the book makes it possible to highlight some of its strengths: for example, the authors are not afraid to point out some paradoxes of modern medicine that are still not taken into account in the policy of the health care and when creating and correcting recommendations for lifestyle modification.

Justifying their principle of the individual approach, the authors point to a U-shaped relationship between some biochemical and anthropometric parameters and health outcomes. In particular, the results of epidemiological studies are cited, indicating the existence of a U-shaped relation between body-mass index and mortality. Several years ago we were the first who reported data on the presence of such a link for type 2 diabetes mellitus patients: the lowest total and cardiovascular mortality was associated with overweight and low obesity [5]. The path to publication of this work was difficult, but today these results have been repeatedly confirmed by other researchers. However, it has not yet led to a correction of life style modification guidelines.

Sometimes it seems that the misunderstood “political correctness” in the Public Health framework hampers the discussion of practical conclusions following the recognition of some

unexpected phenomena, including “obesity paradox”. It will be good if the possibility of such a discussion will appear in the framework of new concepts of Public health, such as that developed by scientists of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova. The book under review is not without its shortcomings: section 3.1-3.6, which describes practices of body modification in different ethnic groups, looks in the context of the entire book inappropriate.

The authors point to the problem of increasing the frequency of certain diseases in modern society, reasonably suggesting that this may be due to successful treatment, the achievement of reproductive age by the patients and the accumulation of the corresponding genotype in the population. One possible example of such a disease may be type 1 diabetes mellitus. However, the solution of this problem in acceptable for the individual and society manner is not possible, therefore it is necessary to establish a humane ethical framework within which it is possible to discuss interventions aimed at improving Public Health. This task is not reflected in the book, its actualization seems to us inevitable.

Some principles of sanocreatology (e.g. individual approach) are close to some new concepts of Public Health (personalized medicine).

In general, I am sure that the idea of researching such a category as human health and assessing the ways of it’s preserving through scientific physiological methods is very fruitful. An example of such work may be the research conducted in Ukraine, which revealed a positive effect of hypoxic training on cardiovascular and metabolic indicators [6, 7].

I am sure that the physiologists of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, having made the first step in Sanocreatology foundation and development, will undertake every possible effort in order to prepare for the publication of the subsequent planned volumes.

Reference

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