

## HEALTH PRESERVING COMPETENCES OF A PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER: FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

*The article highlights foreign experience as for the health preserving competency requirements. In the historical retrospective the conceptual views of the ideas of health preserving have been examined. It is emphasized that the health preserving technologies used in the modern school, and, in particular, in the primary school, have changed with the change of understanding of the concept of “health”. Different paradigms of health have been considered, the views of national and foreign scientists on the concept of “competence”, “health preserving competences” have been explained.*

*It is generalized that the models of health preserving competency are generally considered at the following three “levels”: functional, interactive and critical.*

*It is emphasized that in the process of formation of health preserving competences of the future primary school teacher, it is necessary to ensure the increase of the level of knowledge about health, taking into account its socio-economic determinants, as well as knowledge and skills related to the healthy lifestyle in all conditions of vital activity, including self-appraisal, self-efficacy and social support. It is important to develop the understanding of the link between public health and the socio-economic development of the country.*

*Key Words: health, health preserving competencies, primary school teacher.*

The research covers in detail the concepts of “competence” and “health-preserving competence”.

It is emphasized that Ukrainian scientists interpret competence as “a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills, ways of thinking, views, values and other personal qualities that determine a person’s ability to successfully socialize, professional and / or further educational activity.

The definition focuses on understanding of the essence of competence as a complex personal matter that allows performing professional and educational activity that is shaped and improved during training.

Health preserving competency models are generally considered to be at such three “levels”: functional, interactive and critical.

Functional level implies presence of knowledge in the sphere of health and health preserving, related to the provision of factual information on health threats and the effective use of the health care system; it focuses on knowledge of life and health risks and health services and adherence to medical recommendations. The interactive level involves having knowledge, abilities and skills about health and health preserving that focus on forming personal skills, enhancing of motivation and confidence in actions, regardless of the received medical recommendations. The critical level generates knowledge, abilities and skills about health and health preserving that are “one step ahead” and enable people to understand the social and economic determinants of health.

Competence in the sphere of health preserving means achieving the level of knowledge, personal skills and self-confidence in decision-making and taking measures to improve the personal health and the health of the entire society by changing lifestyles and living conditions.

Thus, to understand the concept of health preserving competence means that one of the goals of pedagogical education should be to “strengthen” the knowledge by developing competences in the sphere of health and health preserving. They need to be more than functional, namely they should be targeted to professional training of the future primary school teachers in the sphere of health care and health preserving, which enhances their knowledge, understanding and ability to act; they should not limit people’s lifestyle changes or increase their ability to adhere to the recommended therapy. Such initiatives concerning pedagogical education should increase socio-economic awareness, which will course in improving the present state of health of citizens and promote activities that can improve the quality of life of people and the society in which they live.

It is generalized that pedagogical education today faces two major challenges in promoting health and health preserving technologies. The first one is connected with the forming of the future primary school teachers’ interest in learning popular

tendencies of the modern culture, which have a fundamental impact on both everyday perceptions of health and development of diseases, and the practices used by people in this sphere. The second is related to the development of intellectual competencies in the sphere of critical analysis of discourses about health, contained in periodicals and scientific-methodological publications.

The article provides the list of requirements for health preserving competencies that are outlined by Czech scientist Yu. Liba, who emphasizes that the competences of primary school teachers are particularly important among others in the following aspects: understanding health in all dimensions (psychological, social, ethical, aesthetic, economic, philosophical, political) and take responsibility for the own health and the health of other people; assessment of the etiology of existing and potential health problems, ensuring the balance between cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of education in the context of health promotion; knowledge of health and prevention, including drug addiction abuse prevention, as well as the methods of implementing school programs on prevention; creating own personality and professional identity, emphasizing own personal example, adhering to the principles of the healthy lifestyle (teacher as motivator, moderator, practitioner of health preserving technologies and preventive measures); creation and modification of the system of educational activity in internal school rules and regulations related to the preservation and promotion of health, prevention of socio-pathological phenomena, respect for environmental standards or values; diagnosing the risk factors affecting pupils' lifestyles, and then search for ways to overcome or modify them, as well as rethinking and supporting innovative health support solutions; purposeful and flexible use of potential forms of medical and valeological education, directing the educational process to health-oriented ones, interventions to harmonize the development of all aspects of health; selection of preventive actions for primary school pupils; mastering by pupils knowledge in the sphere of health preserving, developing skills and abilities that enable them to participate effectively, to be active and creative in making healthy lifestyle; in the socio-cultural environment to use diverse approaches to teaching in

the context of creating and maintaining conditions for pupils with disabilities, as well as developing and using alternative learning strategies; development of the system of cooperation between schools, family and other social institutions, raising the awareness of parents about health, in order to promote cooperation in the educational system of all members of society; combination of theoretical considerations and practice; simulation of students' healthy behaviour; use of information-communication technologies for health promotion.

The acquisition of basic health preserving skills, as well as the development of broader health preserving competences, contributes to the systematic improvement of the professional training of the future primary school teachers, to the study of social, medical educational disciplines, to the learning of methods of teaching physical exercises, which promote health and support conscious attitude to own health, which is oriented to the future and physically active lifestyle. Studying and improving the personal, social and educational competences of the future primary school teachers can become the basis for building health preserving competence.