

New competences to manage urban health: Health City Manager core curriculum

Andrea Lenzi¹, Stefano Capolongo², Gualtiero Ricciardi³, Carlo Signorelli⁴, David Napier⁵, Andrea Rebecchi⁶, Chiara Spinato⁷

¹University of Rome La Sapienza, Dept Experimental Medicine; ²Department of Architecture, Built environment and Construction engineering (ABC) - Politecnico di Milano; ³Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Rome; ⁴Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele in Milan; ⁵University College of London (UCL); ⁶Department of Architecture, Built environment and Construction engineering (ABC) - Politecnico di Milano; ⁷Chiara Spinato, Health City Institute

Summary. A core curriculum is an essential step in development knowledge, competences and abilities and it defines educational content for the specialized area of practice in such a way that it can be delivered to new professional job. The Health City Manager core curriculum defines the strategic aspects of action to improve health in cities through a holistic approach, with regard to the individual, and a multi-sectoral approach, with regard to health promotion policies within the urban context. The Health City Manager core curriculum recognizes that the concept of health is an essential element for the well-being of a society, and this concept does not merely refer to physical survival or to the absence of disease, but includes psychological aspects, natural, environmental, climatic and housing conditions, working, economic, social and cultural life – as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO). The Health City Manager core curriculum considers health not as an “individual good” but as a “common good” that calls all citizens to ethics and to the observance of the rules of civil coexistence, to virtuous behaviours based on mutual respect. The common good is therefore an objective to be pursued by both citizens and mayors and local administrators who must act as guarantors of equitable health ensuring, that the health of the community is considered as an investment and not just as a cost. The role of cities in health promotion in the coming decades will be magnified by the phenomenon of urbanization with a concentration of 70% of the global population on its territory.

Key words: urban health, public health, Health City Manager, core curriculum

Introduction

The concept of health is essential to the well-being of a society. This concept, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), relates not merely to physical survival or the absence of disease, but includes psychological factors, natural, environmental, climate and housing conditions and working, economic, social and cultural life. Cities play an important role in health promotion owing to the phenomenon of urbanisation, with 70% of the world's population living in urban areas.

The EU Committee of the Regions during its 123rd plenary session, 11-12 May 2017, approved the

own-initiative Opinion “Health in cities: the common good”. The Opinion calls for more effective and responsive multilevel governance to improve health policy and design a fair, shared, harmonious urban system and suggest evaluating the benefits of establishing the post of a healthy city manager and it suggested that cities which do not yet have such a service should evaluate the potential benefits and costs of establishing the post of a HEALTH CITY MANAGER, who would interpret the needs expressed by the city and guide the improvement process in synergy with local authorities by aligning their policies and ensuring their implementation.

