



## METHODOLOGY OF BIOETHICS APPROBATION IN YEREVAN STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

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### **Abstract**

*In October 2005, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted by acclamation the "Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights". For the first time in the history of bioethics, Member States committed themselves and the international community to respect and apply the fundamental principles of bioethics set forth within a single text.*

*The aim of this Declaration is to provide assistance for realization of principles of bioethics and support deeper understanding of the ethic consequences of scientific and technological progress, especially for the youth.*

*In 2008, Division of Ethics of Science and Technology Sector for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO worked out an Educational Programme (Bioethics Core Curriculum).*

*On November 23, 2010, a Memorandum was signed between UNESCO and Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi. The Memorandum was aimed to test the Bioethics Core Curriculum of UNESCO.*

*In the article we analyze purposes and goals of studying the Course, disputable shortcomings of the Programme, possible recommendations to improve the course of bioethics, considering positive aspects, indisputable advantages and our suggestions.*

**Keywords:** principles of declaration, human rights, memorandum, non-formal ways of lessons, advantages, shortcoming, recommendations, dilemma.

### **Introduction**

In October 2005, the 33rd Session of the General Conference of UNESCO adopted the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. For the first time in the history of bioethics, Member States committed themselves and the international community to respect and apply the fundamental principles of bioethics set forth within a single text.

The declaration embodies a set of bioethical principles that has been agreed upon by 191 Member States of UNESCO after an intense elaboration and consultation process involving independent and governmental experts from all regions of the world. This set of bioethical principles provides a common global platform, by which bioethics can be introduced and strengthened within each Member State, and UNESCO is mandated to promote, disseminate, and elaborate these principles for practical purposes.

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*tance for realization of principles and support deeper understanding of the ethic consequences of scientific and technological development, especially for the youth.*

The Government should make efforts to assist with education and professional preparation in the sphere of bioethics, as well as encourage the realization of programmes and spread information and knowledge on bioethics.

In 2008, Division of Ethics of Science and Technology Sector for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO worked out an Educational Programme on Bioethics: "Bioethics Core Curriculum" [*Bioethics Core Curriculum, 2008*].

On November 23, 2010, a Memorandum was signed by Mr. Dendev Badarch, UNESCO Director of the UNESCO Moscow Office, on behalf of UNESCO Director-General and consultant Susanna Davtyan on behalf of the Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi (YSMU) [*Davtyan S., 2011*].

The Memorandum was aimed to test the Basic Educational Programme of UNESCO.

Before signing the Memorandum with YSMU

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(Armenia), UNESCO Bureau in Moscow had signed Memorandums with the former Soviet Union Universities of Moscow, Kazan (Russian Federation) and Minsk (Republic of Belarus), whose experience was carefully studied.

During the second semester of 2011, the experimental course of bioethics based on Basic Educational Programme was worked out, developed, and presented in YSMU.

The project was realized with the support of UNESCO Moscow Bureau.

Within the scope of this Declaration, in decisions or practices taken or carried out by those to whom it is addressed, the following principles are to be respected [*Bioethics Core Curriculum, 2008*].

The educational Programme involves 17 themes; the first and the second topics are devoted to form concepts of *Ethics* and *Bioethics* in general.

The rest 15 topics are devoted to the principles of Bioethics from UNESCO Universal Declaration:

- Human dignity and human rights;
- Benefit and harm;
- Autonomy and individual responsibility;
- Consent [*Informed Consent, 2003*];
- Persons without the capacity to consent;
- Respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity;
- Privacy and confidentiality;
- Equality, justice and equity;
- Non-discrimination and non-stigmatization;
- Respect for cultural diversity and pluralism;
- Solidarity and cooperation;
- Social responsibility and health;
- Sharing of benefits;
- Protecting future generation;
- Protection of the environment, biosphere, and biodiversity.

**Brief history:** A course in Bioethics has been included in the educational curriculum of YSMU since 2000 for students of the following faculties: General Medicine, Stomatology, Pharmacy, and Military Medicine).

Unlike many countries, where this subject is taught to students in Law, Biology, Theology, etc., in Yerevan (Armenia) Bioethics is taught only to future doctors. There appears to be a tendency to include this course in the curricula of other Universities at such faculties as Philosophy, Biology. Due to efforts of the Armenian Unit of International Network of UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, we can see the progress in this sphere in Yerevan [*Davtyan S., 2011*].

In general, the course in Bioethics for future doctors is based on “Georgetown mantra”. It is a conceptual scheme created by T.L. Beauchamp (Georgetown University, USA) and J.F. Childress (University of Virginia, USA) [*Beauchamp T., Childress J., 2008*].

“Georgetown mantra” is based on four principles:

- Respect for autonomy;
- nonmaleficence - *Noli nocere*;
- beneficence - *Sac bonum*;
- justice.

Drawing from contemporary research – and integrating detailed case studies and vivid real-life examples and scenarios – they demonstrate how these *prima facie* principles can be expanded to apply to various conflicts and dilemmas, how to deliver bad news to whether or not to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatments.

Apart from these four principles the course of Bioethics usually involves such thematic areas as moral problems of end-of-life decision-making, euthanasia, palliative care, moral problems of transplanting, genetic testing and interference of human genes, defending the rights of people with mental disabilities, moral problems connected with AIDS/HIV, research ethics, involuntary hospitalization, abortion and sterilization, genetic engineering and cloning, etc.

As obvious, the course based on Basic Educational Programme (Core Curriculum) of UNESCO essentially differs from traditional courses proposed in Armenia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, etc.

The Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights is more oriented towards the common and collective values than to individual ones. It pays more attention to the problems of social health and justice.

We are quite sure that delivering lectures is an Art: it presupposes communication between a lecturer and the audience. The latter is studied from three angles: before communication, during communication and after it.

This means that from the point of view of sociological investigations it is possible to study each link of communication [*Davidov Yu., 1969; Davtyan S., 2007 b; 2011*]:

- *Who is telling* (in this case: lecturer);
- *Who is told* (students);
- *What is told*;
- *How is it told*;
- *What are the results*.

Based on our knowledge in sociology, proceed-

ing from the above-mentioned formula of American sociologist Lossuell and our pedagogical experience, we use means of sociological investigation to assess students. The investigation before communication is aimed to find out what they know about the subject being taught, whereas after the communication, after finishing the course, we assess what changes take place in their minds, what they learn practically. It is important for the teachers not only what to teach but also how to teach. This problem was thoroughly discussed at the International Scientific Conference organized by Professor A. Carni, UNESCO Chair in Bioethics.

The best version will be when lecturers try

- To communicate deep knowledge;
- To arouse interest of students towards the subject;
- To make students go to lectures willingly, with love and expectations and not by force;
- To arise in students wishes and strivings to resemble their lecturer, her/his way of speaking, dressing, behavior;
- To educate not only with words but by personal behavior as well.

In such case, students will not get tired of lectures, and even if they become tired, the lectures are considered very useful and not waste of time.

It is convenient to say that it will be perfect, if the lecturers disseminate not only certain knowledge to the students, but also teach them how to appreciate values of life, the ability to debate and express their thoughts clearly and understandably, to persuade.

Before teaching the course, Forms prepared by UNESCO were handed to students for filling in. These Forms contained 10 questions concerning students' knowledge on Bioethics and its main problems. The respondents were also asked, if they had come across such problems during their life; there were questions on their attitude to these problems [Davtyan S., 2008].

The majority of students could not relate these questions with their future speciality and life, because they were in the 1st year of their getting bachelor's degree and had no idea about their specialized subjects and philosophy yet. Therefore, they usually did not have any idea about problems of Bioethics. Thus, it becomes clear that realization of these problems comes later with gaining sufficient knowledge on medicine and with the coming individual maturity.

#### **Purposes and Goals of Bioethics Course:**

- To introduce and acquaint the students with the

principles of Bioethics that are present in the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, explain their meaning and usage in certain practical situations;

- To help the students in getting insight of Bioethics not only as a science, but also as a valuable orientation towards every existence and life;

- To acquaint students with the moral aspect of modern medicine and biomedical experiments, involving humans and animals;

- To present the viewpoints of our great thinkers, to help students in formulating their own opinions on topical problems of Bioethics;

- To teach students how to take part in discussions and express their opinions clearly and understandably, convince with persuasive arguments;

- To inject them the idea to bend down before LIFE, save each of its manifestations, turn striving the basis of moral renewal and perfection of humankind [Schweitzer A., 1929];

- To inject the idea that not all achievements of science and technology are always morally justified. For example, we can take a stem cell from human skin and create, for example, a number of Julius Roberts. Technically and scientifically it is possible, but whether this can be justified morally? Hence, Albert Schweitzer was quite right to say: "Whether I have the right to pick all the fruits within my reach?" [Schweitzer A., 1929]. The ideas of the great humanist sound very urgent even today, because in the center of these ideas are human suffering and destiny.

There is also a similar idea in the Testament:

*"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing."*

- To inject the idea that "Love is the Genius of Existence". The following notes from Alicia Ghiragossian confirm these words [Davtyan S., 2004; 2009 a; b].

*Love is the only genius of existence.*

*The opposite of love is not just dis-love but death itself.*

*Lovers restore eternity.*

As we have already mentioned, before lectures on Bioethics the students were given Questionnaires, which they filled in. We found out that most of the respondents showed infantilism and the others demonstrated ignorance in response to the offered questions. Only small part of students could perceive the

themes offered.

After the course, new Forms were suggested to the students and lecturers for filling in. These Forms containing questions, the so-called "Expert Forms", were also prepared by UNESCO.

During one of the classes, the students were informed about the results of questioning.

Certainly, all the answers were interesting and informative and were essentially different from the responses of preliminary testing.

The course had aroused interest towards certain problems, to which students suggested their own comments.

Many students wanted to develop their bioethical thinking and offered to have discussions in smaller groups (we arrange our seminars with 35-40 students) and analyze case studies.

Others noted that there is no proportionality between the given country's specific cultural peculiarities and global principles. The results of questioning were used by lecturers in fulfilling and a slight modifying the content of lectures on some themes.

According to the Programme of UNESCO, it is desirable to have lessons in non-formal ways. First of all, these are *discussions, role plays, case studies, watching films* and *performances* with further discussions and analysis of evidence-based problems. For a comprehensive study of such topics as "Patient – physician relationship", "The culture of physician's speech and professional communication", "Involuntary or compulsory hospitalization", "Sterilization and abortion" we offer to read or come and listen to several lectures in Yerevan theatres instead of YSMU lecture halls. These theatre performances were arranged in advance, shown especially and only for our students: "Psychosis" and "The Streetcar Named "Desire" by Tennessee Williams, "Alba and her Daughters" by Federiko Garcia Lorca (Gabriel Sundukyan Academic Theatre), "The Eastern Dentist" by Hakob Paronyan (Hakob Paronyan Theatre of Musical Comedy), and "Physiology of Tribe" by Aghasi Ayvazyan (Henrik Malian Theatre).

We also suggest the students either read or watch the play "The Sexual Neurosis of our Parents: Libido" by Lukas Bärfuss where the problems mentioned above are discussed. It is important to mention that three of the performances, "Psychosis", "The Streetcar Named "Desire" and "Alba and her Daughters", are arranged for 100 spectators. Actors play on the stage, the audience is also on the stage

and the main hall is closed. This is an original phenomenon in the theatrical world. Each performance is followed by a vivid discussion on a suggested topic with actors and the director. After that, the students write an essay to reflect their impressions. The best works are printed in University publications: "Future Doctor" and "Medicus".

In addition to theatre performances, students are invited to watch relevant documentary and feature films like "Water", "Ward No. 6", "Do you know Jack Kevorkian?", etc.

As a result, we can state that through art the students get better and easier understanding of topics discussed. It is well known that it is better to see once than hear 100 times: *seeing is believing*. At the same time, students get skills to analyze the works of art, to make considerations about their taste and esthetic values especially that most of the first-year students have not ever been to the theatre. So, this is like shooting two rabbits with one shot: *killing two birds with one stone* [Davtyan S., 2007 a; 2010].

The following performances are advised to attend and books to read:

- "Alba and her daughters" according to "The House of Bernarda Alba" play by Federico Garcia Lorca;
- "The Streetcar named "Desire" by Tennessee Williams;
- "For Whom the Bell Tolls?" by Ernest Hemingway;
- "The Physiology of the Tribe" by Aghasi Ayvazyan;
- "The Sexual Neurosis of our Parents: Libido" by Lukas Bärfus;
- "The Eastern Dentist" by Hakob Paronyan;
- "The Trees" by Hrant Matevosyan;
- "Ward No. 6" by Anton Chekhov.

#### **Disputable shortcomings of the Programme:**

□ The suggested course is oriented to the future doctors and presupposes moral regulation of future doctors' or medical researchers' clinical behavior. However, for the biologists, bioengineers and for students of ecological medicine this course presents more cognitive rather than professional interest [Mishatkina T., 2011].

□ This Programme is rather flexible and gives the lecturers an opportunity to widen its content and use different methods and approaches. It also gives the chance to adapt it for the concrete professional area and sociocultural conditions. However, it is

possible only if the lecturer is highly prepared in this sphere and is of high quality. As a proof of this is the fact that UNESCO has signed Memorandum (contract) with some CIS countries, taking into consideration that here they have met experts, specialists, who have publications in International Magazines, who have published manuals on Bioethics.

That is why the Programme needs some modifications in its content, structural, and purposeful plans.

□ Educational plan is effective from the point of view of spreading the knowledge about the ethical principles of "Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights". However, this plan is less effective from the point of view of spreading the knowledge of Bioethics completely, because the Basic variant of the Programme is generally oriented to those principles of Bioethics, which are connected with Human Rights. Moreover, the analysis of basic problematic spheres of Bioethics, such as the danger connected with genetic developments and new biotechnologies, experimental use of stem cells, the problems of euthanasia, transplantology, involuntary hospitalization, etc. is missing.

□ Educational materials, which exist as a leading Programme for the lecturers are quite appropriate and informative, but not always comprehensive enough, as problems typical to countries of CIS and for Russia, Tatarstan, Belarus, and Armenia, in particular, are not address. Once more, I should like to mention that this article is based on not only the results obtained in Armenia, but with the use of results obtained in Russia, Tatarstan and Belarus [Mishatkina T., 2011].

□ As this Programme is created for future doctors, it is natural that there is not enough attention to the bioethical problems concerning the professional interests of future biologist-researchers, in particular, such topics as the right for future, manipulation of living organisms, alternative methods of scientific surveys and teaching. Perhaps, this is the reason why in their marks given to the course by student-biologists of Sakharov University of Minsk the aspect of connection between the course and professional interests did not get such a high mark [Mishatkina T., 2011].

□ The first theme that concerns "General Ethics" the second theme "General characteristics of Bioethics", the eleventh theme "Non-discrimination and non-stigmatization", and the seventeenth theme "Protection of the environment, the biosphere and biodiversity" need essential modifications, corrections and even additions in their content plan.

### ***Our recommendations to improve the course of Bioethics:***

In general, the new course got positive value from respondents. However, we can recommend some changes and suggestions to the development of the course.

- It is positive that UNESCO suggests an educational Programme which is open to changes and modifications in order to make it more available for the students of different specialities: not only for medical doctors but also for the biologists, bioengineers, theologians, lawyers, philosophers, etc.

- If we want to implement the Educational Programme of UNESCO on Bioethics in our educational system (Core Curriculum) it would be better to change the number of hours given to lectures from 30 to 50 in order to give more hours to the study of general ethics and esthetics (especially in the institutions, where Ethics is not included in their curriculum. In addition, we propose to remake the first theme trying to bring it as close as possible to the problems of Bioethics. [Davtyan S., 2011; Mishatkina T., 2011].

- To distribute hours allocated to separate themes. There are themes, to which 0.5-1 hour are given, but we think it is not enough, e.g. to the first and second themes we offer to add more hours not forgetting to pay special attention to the important problems, such as the problem of life and death, interference of reproductive technologies, involuntary abortion, sterilization, hospitalization, palliative care.

- In the contents of themes referring the concrete principles of Bioethics and articles of Declaration it is desirable to take into account the topical "open" urgent problems of Bioethics, such as reanimation and transplantation, the problem of euthanasia, genetic diagnostics, etc.

- As the content plan of Bioethics is wider than the Declaration on Bioethics and UNESCO course is called "Bioethics", we find it more sensible to include in thematic scope those bioethical problems, which found no place in the Declaration, namely: "The Rights of Nature", "The Rights of Living people" or "Ethical norms of using animals in biomedical research and in educational processes" [Mishatkina T., 2011].

- In the Preface, we also recommend to inform the students about topical bioethical problems existing in CIS countries in general and in different regions in particular.

**What is positive in this educational Programme:**

➤ Innovation of the non-standard structure of the course, which gives the opportunity to inform the students about Declaration and main principles of Bioethics as well.

➤ In schools and higher educational institutions, where this subject is not included in their main course and is not taught, it is positive that this course offers to study Ethics in the 1st theme. It should be emphasized that in the past, not only Ethics but also Esthetics were included in the curriculum of YSMU; however, present-day students are deprived of these two subjects. In our opinion, this fact cannot help teachers and administrators to prepare or educate high quality physicians and scientists. Deep knowledge is a necessity, of course, but the culture of speech and esthetics of behaviour is very important for physicians and medical staff.

➤ The course addresses Human Rights. It allows students to be acquainted not only with the Declaration on Bioethics, but also with the Declaration on Human Rights. In many countries, Armenia among them, it is very important, because people know little about the Declaration and Human Rights.

**Indisputable advantages of the Programme:**

According to the lecturers' point of view, the main goals of the course were formed clearly and understandably and the content of educational plan corresponds to the suggested goals.

Most of the themes were clearly organized, and it was very easy to use them for teaching purposes. Although the Programme suggests many variants, it is standardized and reflects international and cross-cultural approach in relation to Bioethics. It allows studying the course on the basis of international normative documents: "Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights" and "Declaration of Human Rights" subordinating the whole course to a single logic.

Some PhD students want to express their gratitude for giving them the possibility to express their opinion about the Basic Educational Programme on Bioethics. They would like all these articles to change the world for the better and not to be in vain.

Most of the students write that the patient does not have the right to decide anything connected with his illness. The doctor should make all the decisions. PhD students regard this viewpoint right but partially. When the patient is already in hospital, he has no responsibilities.

According to our respondents, it is the doctor,

who takes all these responsibilities for patient's health and in case of a mistake only the doctor is responsible". The students find that the patient does not have so much knowledge as the doctor and he cannot influence the doctor's decisions. However, in case of a dilemma, the doctor should inform the patient about his decisions".

So, the majority of PhD students write that the doctor should make a decision himself, because only he is responsible for that decision. In any case, he has to listen to patient's opinion and obtain his/her informed consent.

**Doctors are before a dilemma to "To tell or not to tell the truth to the patient?"**

As PhD students note, in prosperous and developed countries the population undergoes a preventive examination (screening) 2 or 3 times a year. If there is something suspicious in the organism he/she calmly accepts this news being sure that the quest is satisfied. As a rule, illnesses are still in the first stage and the patient begins his/her treatment without any panic, being quite sure that at this stage the illness is entirely curable [Davtyan S., 2002].

What goes on in the Republic of Armenia? Almost no or very little annual free examinations of the population take place in a country that became developing (or a country with economy in transition) from developed one. Patients learn about their illness when nothing can help them. In this case, to tell a patient about the illness means to warn him/her that death is near and his/her days are numbered. Unfortunately, in Armenia the healthy mode of life is not so rooted. Mass media, family, school do not provide with decent knowledge. No work is done in this direction to develop a culture of healthy lifestyle with sport and food regime for people of different age [Davtyan S., 2009 a; b].

Yerevan is over-flooded with internet clubs. Day after day new Internet clubs are opened even in the same street; they offer the young people an opportunity to live in virtual world instead of the real one. In these clubs filled with smoke young people feel themselves as the best runner, fighter, winner, shooter, etc. just pressing a button.

Unfortunately, in a real life, this arouses the complex of not full-value, *the inferiority complex*, because it turns out that they cannot even shoot, fight, build or win. For a young man, who is weak-willed the simplest way is to return to virtual life as it draws like a swamp.

This is a problem, which the Government should solve quickly or otherwise, running after profits, we can lose a considerable part of our young people. The number of sport gyms, or shooting-grounds should be increased; we should inject taste and striving for healthy mode of life.

As PhD students note, for the most part of population getting medical service is an expensive pleasure, nearly unavailable and people almost do not go and have examinations. Maybe this is a national characteristic, that people who have no financial problems also do not go and have preventive examinations.

“Armenia wants to join Europe but it is an Asian country and its population is characterized by sensitivity (in contrast, e.g. to Americans, who are cold-hearted and pragmatic, sometimes romantic-pragmatic); so telling the truth to the patient is only justified in economically developed countries”,- answered the majority of students.

At the end of the lecture, students were again handed UNESCO Forms containing 20 questions. It should be noted that Forms were prepared with high professionalism and consisted of 4 thematic parts. The questions were formulated clearly and understandably and served to a high aim of the course. In contrast to PhD students, first-year students, who, studied this subject for only 26 hours followed by 4 hours for 2 tests and did not know anything about it before, answered the questions poorly.

The willingness of UNESCO to make modifications and changes through the most dynamic and revolutionary, fresh and flexible brains of young people deserves only a high praise and gratitude.

Concerning the problem of telling or not the truth to the patient, most students are against telling the truth to the patient. Only little part agrees with this idea for 2 reasons:

- Maybe there is somebody the patient wants to apologize or remit sins; or
- The patient has some unfinished plans.

This means that doctors should have not only deep professional knowledge but also practical experience. Why? Doctors should not only classify patients according to 4 types (phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine, melancholic) but also, according to Z. Freud, whether the patient learning a bad news will turn to Thanatos (despair, suicide, death) or to Eros (life, love, smile, laugh, humor). So, studying concrete situation the doctor will make a right decision to tell

the truth or not. Yes, indeed Hippocrate's hat is heavy [Davtyan S., 2009 a].

What refers to Hippocrate's Oath, the majority of students note that this is a very nice, but formal ceremony and it puts under a question what part of doctors keep their vow? For example, the statement “they should treat soldiers like generals, beggars like kings”. “Is this rule preserved?” ask students. Moreover, the ceremony is not well-organized: one student reads from the stage, others stand in the hall but whether they listen or not, are indifferent or active?.. Only at the end they repeat trice: “I vow. ”

“There is no legal or moral responsibility for this vow and it can be violated without any punishment” write PhD students and some first-year students.

“Every person has the right to die, and doctors should help him or her not to die, but refuse such a decision and not become helpers by force. If a patient wants to die he/she can do so, but not lay his/her guilt at the door of somebody else” wrote students.

Each person has a certain life period dictated from above and no one, even the owner of the life, has the right to stop it through euthanasia.

Most students say no to euthanasia, noting that a person has not come to this world by his own wish or plan, so he/she cannot decide when to leave it.

What refers to incurable diseases, doctors should not say that they are incurable; instead, they should better think what to do today to make them curable. In this connection, most students are for opening of hospices.

The soul like the body is sometimes asleep, and you should knock at the door to awaken it. It is the lecturer, who knocks and opens the door. The Holy Bible says: “they have ears, but do not hear, they have eyes, but do not see”. It is the lecturer, who has a divine key to hearing and seeing. This is how I understand the mission of tutors, lecturers teaching Ethics, Bioethics, and Esthetics.

The Earth and the people living on this planet, in spite of their religion, belief, sex or the party they belong to, form one body and if one organ or cell of this body (or one part of the world) falls ill or is sick, the other parts of the whole body cannot be healthy and the body becomes ill too. It means that we can make progress only together. If a man (or a nation) enjoys himself/herself or is indifferent when in the farthest or nearest part of the world a tragedy, act of terrorism or war breaks out, it means that he/she is at least short-sighted or thoughtless [Davtyan S., 2009 c].

We must not think that it does not concern me; we must not be indifferent or cheerful. No, never. We either become healthy together, or fall ill together. Each of us should be very responsible for every our word. We should understand and help each other by our soul [*Davtyan S., 2006; 2009 a*].

Once again, I would like to draw your attention to this delicate problem. We should mention that Armenian medieval thinkers Mkhitar Gosh and Smbat Goondstable wrote in article 119 and 154 of the book "Code of Law":

– "The physician, who injures the patients' health on purpose and does not give sufficient knowledge to the students, should be sentenced" [*Vardanyan S., 2006*].

This statement reflects the high level of educational criteria of medieval Armenian schools.

It would be sensible to organize trainings for the lecturers of bioethics under the patronage of UNESCO, with the possibilities to give an international certificate of UNESCO to those ones, who will pass the training and read the Basic Educational Programme on Bioethics. Experts from Russia, Belarus and Tatarstan, Professors B. Yudin, T. Mishatkina and M. Abrosimova, also hold this opinion [*Mishatkina T., 2011*].

In 2009, on May 28-29, the National Commission of the Republic of Moldova for UNESCO in

cooperation with UNESCO Office in Moscow and UNESCO Secretariat in Paris organized in Chisinau a Sub-regional Meeting of experts in ethics teaching within the framework of the UNESCO Ethics Education Programme. The Meeting was a regional component of the global UNESCO strategy in promoting information on the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights adopted by UNESCO in 2005; it was directed to enhance the quality of teaching bioethics in UNESCO Member States.

The Meeting in Chisinau has gathered bioethicists from 10 CIS countries and leading experts from different regions of the world: physicians, philosophers, jurists, and politicians, who have an interest in developing education in bioethics and work actively in this field in their countries, as well as on the international level within the framework of the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (IBC), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of CIS countries (IPA CIS) and other international structures.

The establishment of a Regional Association for Bioethics Teachers with the main purpose of developing a mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of bioethics education on a regular basis was one of the Meeting's outcomes. The Association of lecturers in Bioethics set up in 2009 in Chisinau might serve for such kind of activities.

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