DOCTORS’ AND OLDER PATIENTS’ HEALTH LITERACY ON FUNCTIONAL DECLINE AND FRAILTY, RELATED TO AGEING - data from Romania and Latvia

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Abstract (partial)

Introduction. The present study – endorsed by the Committee Permanent/ Standing Committee of the European Doctors (CPME) – generated data for the first time on the levels of health literacy on functional decline and frailty, related to ageing, for doctors and older patients (60+ years old) in Romania and Latvia. This trial tackles not only the lack of data on the topic but it provides insight from two EU member states: a Central-South/Eastern and respectively a Baltic – Central-North/Eastern – ones, that (also) struggle with the fall in fertility, coupled with high percentage of outward migration predominantly within the early working age population.

Materials and methods. 300 doctors responded to the questionnaire: 148 doctors practicing in Romania and 150 in Latvia. 1 doctor indicated Andorra was his main place of practice and another Romanian doctor indicated Nigeria as his main country of practice. 301 responses were received from 60+ older patients living in Romania and Latvia. Most respondents were aged between 65 and 74 years (38.2%).

Conclusions. The self-declared awareness on functional decline and frailty, related to ageing, is high for both patients and doctors in Romania and Latvia (over 70%) but overall levels of health literacy on both these items are determined also by degrees of access, understanding, appraisal and application which reduce them. All these health literacy components are much lower for patients, with over 20% of respondents finding it difficult to access information, understand it and/or demonstrating knowledge about functional decline and/or frailty, whereas for the doctors there is a discrepancy between claiming no problematic awareness, access and understanding and the appraise and apply related components, as defined in the common background of this study.

Note;

Gelu Onose1-3,9 (coordinating editor – Rapporteur of the CPME for Healthy and Active Ageing), (alphabetically): Gunta Ancane4,5, Ana Capisizu CPME expert for Healthy and Active Ageing)1,6,9, Monica Haras (ex CPME expert for Healthy and Active Ageing and ex1-3,9), Olga Rostowska(ex-President of the EMSA)7, Kristine Sorensen8, Tiberiu Spircu2, Jacques van der Vliet (CPME expert EIPAHA from the)9 and (from the CPME9 Secretariat): Anamaria Corca, Henry Kizito, Daria Zygmunt