

AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES IN THE PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS IN LITHUANIA

История медицины повествует, что в 15 веке в Литве из стран Западной Европы, появились первые образованные медики. Сегодня о нашем здоровье заботится обширное медицинское общество.

От знаний, зависит квалификация медиков. Библиотека – это один из основных источников знаний, а долг библиотекаря – предложить читателю новейшие источники информации и методы доступа к ней.

В конце 1994 года в Литовской медицинской библиотеке открылся Центр аудиовизуальных средств обучения. Для удобства медиков в Республике открыли еще 4 филиала этого центра.

Основная коллекция аудиовизуальных средств обучения хранится в Литовской медицинской библиотеке. Медики чрезвычайно рады этому новшеству, помогающему легче усваивать профессиональные знания.

Старая поговорка гласит: “лучше один раз увидеть, чем сто раз услышать”.

Medicine, as a science, has a very long history. For ages barbers, pagan priests, wizards, sorcerers, herbalists took care of people with various health disorders. Only in the early 15th century, after the adoption of Christianity, a first trained physician came to Lithuania to work at the court of the Grand Duke.

In the beginning of the 16th century the first hospitals, chemist's shops were established. “Commentariola Medica et Physica ad Aliquot Scripta“, the first book on medical subjects, appeared in Lithuania in 1584. S.Simonius, the physician of Steponas Batoras, the King, wrote it.

In 1715, the royal Medical School was founded in Gardinas where medium-level medical specialists were prepared. Medical science began to develop faster, when in 1781 the Medical Faculty (Collegium Medicum) opened the door at Vilnius University, one of the best teaching institutions in Europe in the 19th century.

Nowadays medical professionals are trained in the Medical Faculty of Vilnius University and Kaunas Medical Academy. Medium level education is provided in medical schools in Kaunas, Vilnius, Panevezys and other towns.

Public health care in Lithuania is provided by 1749 medical institutions including out-patient departments with 16 884 practising physicians and 38 603 medium level medical personnel. Health care professionals continue their training after they graduate from medical schools or universities. There is a great pressure on medical professionals to keep up-to date professionally. Knowledge in the medical field is forwarded by great efforts and resources put in research.

Library makes a significant part of knowledge infrastructure. Its duty is to offer the readers the newest information sources and retrieving methods and teach how to use new technologies for information searches.

Regaining Independence in Lithuania started a new step in our libraries' activities. After the iron curtain disappeared, there are more contacts with foreign libraries. Dale Lukas, the acquisitions librarian from the National Library of Medicine (USA), Craig Locatis, the multimedia specialist from the same library, have brought ideas to our library, new to us, but widely applied in the USA and other developed countries. In 1994, the Lithuanian Research and Study Centre in Chicago in co-operation with the World Lithuanian Medical Association prepared a project of the Audiovisual Resource Centre in the Lithuanian Library of Medicine.

Why was this centre founded? Medicine, as a profession, historically depends on visual materials in its teaching programs. With the development of visual and audio technologies, medical educators were the first to apply them to teach medical students the basics of anatomy, pathology and new surgery techniques. The videotape is highly useful in providing continuing medical education to physicians and medical personnel in order to keep them up-dated in art techniques, treatment procedures and patient management protocols.

The old adage, a PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, is very suitable in the medical field. In therapy and surgery the visual experience can expand the professional knowledge in many healing or even life-saving ways.

Our medical community is very grateful to our Lithuanian compatriots in the USA, who came with the idea of the project for the Audiovisual Resource Centre in the Lithuanian Library of Medicine and helped to implement it.

Our director Salvinija Kociene applied to the Open Lithuania Foundation, which allotted 10 thousand USA dollars for the equipment. One videosystem was bought in Lithuania, other equipment was purchased in the USA. Our colleague Dale Lukas advised us what equipment is needed, and Jonas Rackauskas, the President of Lithuanian Studies Centre in Chicago, has bought and sent it to Lithuania. Six videosystems, six audiorecorders with headphones, two Wall/Rear screen slide projectors were bought.

For the convenience of Lithuanian medical specialists we have founded branch mini centres at Kaunas Medical University, Klaipeda City Hospital, Marijampole and Panevezys Republican Hospitals. We handed them 4 videosystems and 4 audiorecorders. Craig Locatis, the multimedia specialist from National Library of Medicine, USA, has donated videodisc equipment to our library and Kaunas Medical University Library. In 1999 we have acquired a new computer Pentium II with 17-inch monitor.

The Audiovisual Resource Centre has to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To help physicians and middle medical personnel in advancing qualification.
2. To assist medical students in mastering new knowledge in their learning process.
3. To help medical professionals to promote healthy life styles.

According to the project, the main collection of the audiovisual material is held at the Audiovisual Resource Centre of the Lithuanian Library of Medicine. The librarians from our mini centres can borrow them for medical specialist of their region.

I would like to note that our compatriots from the USA donated the main part of our collection. Last year we had a possibility to hand donated doublets of our collection to the Kaunas Medical University Library and Marijampole Republican Hospital. Moreover, some users have contributed to the audiovisual collection with their donations. They have donated the media they had brought from foreign conferences, seminars, and courses. Only in 1998, when our library's financial situation was a little better, our administration allocated money to acquire audiovisual material. According to our patrons needs we have purchased CD-ROMs on cancer, internal medicine, ultrasound diagnostics, dermatology, and emergency care. After 5 years of activities the Audiovisual Resource Centre at the Lithuanian Library of Medicine has got 1271 videocassettes, 541 audiocassettes, 69 CD-ROMs, 43 videodiscs and 11840 slides at our centre. Information about our main audiovisual collection is available in our main alphabetical and subject catalogues, library's issue "Lithuanian Medical Literature". In 1995 catalogue "Learning audiovisual media" was issued. The new edition depends on our library's financial situation. Our patrons can learn about the new material in express information, which is regularly renewed at our library's homepage. In 1999 we began introducing records for audiovisuals into Lithuanian Integral Library Information System (LIBIS).

Our visitors are served in person or in groups in the centre. The librarian helps to select media, prepares equipment and shows how to use it. In cases when additional information is needed there is a possibility to search it via Internet at the place. With guarantee of a medical institution we lend out our material for 3 days. Filing in a lending agreement they take obligations not to violate a copyright and become responsible for the media. Our equipment and media could be used during conferences, seminars, congresses and other events organised at our library's premises. We demonstrate our audiovisual media to our library's visitors to mark The Day of Regaining of our Independence, the World AIDS Day, The World Diabetes Day, and The World Day without Tobacco. We have already have some videotapes about the events in our library: Internet lines opening day, our libraries 50th anniversary day and etc. We are happy having a possibility to demonstrate them during our library's celebrations. Our visitors for their own media could use our equipment.

Who are our users? The main part is students of Vilnius University Medical Faculty, and Vilnius Medical School, and physicians from Physicians Qualification Improvement Courses. Students and medical professionals come with their lecturers or individually. We have heard a lot of good words after the lectures where our media were demonstrated. Audiovisual media help not only to extend knowledge in speciality, but also to develop foreign language skills as all our audiovisuals are in English.

What problems are faced?

The most important thing is library's poor financial situation. We can not plan and form our stock according to our users requirements. The Audiovisual Resource Centre is continuing to depend on the charity, and we are not sure about our future.

Most often our visitors are young people and their English language and computer skills are better. I think that there is still a great number of lecturers of older generation who can not assume the value of the new information media due to conservatism and habits to work only with traditional source of knowledge- books. Application of new technologies change traditional, static learning to dynamic, interactive one, making

training process more interesting and vivid. Our duty is to show merits of modern means and assist in using them.

The social model of the Europe Union, the membership of which Lithuania is seeking, is information society. It is an open and educated society, the members of which can use effectively information technologies in all spheres including their professional one and get use of the national and world- wide resources, but the Government has to ensure an access to these resources.

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