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GLOBAL BIOETHICS APPROACH TO PUBLIC HEALTH

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Summary: Global bioethics, unlike biomedical ethics, deals not only with professional standards, but with common significant global problems of mankind. *Bioethical model* of health is based on the fact that health is a phenomenon which is not associated solely with medicine and medical institutions. One of the key ideas of global bioethics is reforming of medical field in order to create a reliable system for the *protection of public health on a global scale*. The future of bioethics ideas will be certainly determined by the quality and dynamics of democratic reforms in all spheres of Ukrainian society.

Keywords: global bioethics, bioethical model of health, public health

Резюме: Глобальна біоетика на відміну від біомедичної етики має справу не тільки з професійними стандартами, а також зі значимими глобальними проблемами людства. Біоетична модель здоров'я базується на тому факті, що здоров'я - це феномен, не пов'язаний виключно з медициною і медичними установами. Одна з ключових ідей глобальної біоетики - це реформування медичної сфери з метою створення надійної системи захисту громадського здоров'я в глобальному масштабі. Майбутнє біоетичних ідей в Україні буде визначатися якістю та динамікою демократичних реформ у всіх сферах суспільства.

Ключові слова: глобальна біоетика, біоетична модель здоров'я, суспільне здоров'я

Резюме: Глобальная биоэтика в отличие от биомедицинской этики имеет дело не только с профессиональными стандартами, но и значимыми глобальными проблемами человечества. Биоэтическая модель здоровья основана на том факте, что здоровье – это феномен, не связанный исключительно с медициной и медицинскими учреждениями. Одна из ключевых идей глобальной биоетики – это реформирование медицинской сферы с целью создания надежной системы защиты общественного здоровья в глобальном масштабе. Будущее биоэтических идей в Украине будет определяться качеством и динамикой демократических реформ во всех сферах общества.

Ключевые слова: глобальная биоэтика, биоэтическая модель здоровья, общественное здоровье

Bioethics in Ukraine as in many post-Soviet countries has been developing in the context of preceding millennial experience. From the 1970s to 1980s, Soviet scientists got involved in research of the ethical dimensions of science, techniques, medicine and biology, the relationships between values, science, and society. Along with foreign scientists, they came to underline the hazards of modern science and technologies as well as the need for development of bioethics in public health.

It was apparent that the present system of health care in Ukraine needed to be changed in the light of new democratic values and priorities, protection of man's fundamental rights and freedoms. More than 15-year experience with bioethics in Ukraine led to the implementation of global bioethics ideas and principles into medical legislation and health-care practice.

One of the cardinal *bioethics principles is respect for autonomy* and informed consent. According to Ukrainian Law "Basic Legislation on Health Care," a physician is obliged to explain the patient the state of their health, the goal of suggested research and treatment measures, and a prognosis for a possible disease evolution including potential risk for person's health and life. The patient's consent should be sought before applying methods for diagnostics, treatment, and prevention of a disease (art. 43.1).

Bioethical model of health is based on the fact that health is a phenomenon which is not associated solely with medicine and medical institutions. To a large extent, health is the result of personal responsibility for the plans of existence, the realization of life strategies, principles and values. Education of the soul, formation of the self, education of the self and self-care are categories of the same magnitude. They are often considered by drawing an analogy with the legal model of ownership: "A man belongs to himself," he is "his own", he is free, he is his own master, and he has an unfettered power in his own person [1].

This model embodies the idea of human *life* as the harmony of their bodily, physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social dimensions. To be in stable health means to bring our mental modes, style of social and moral behaviour into line with the requirements of nature, the core rules of existence and the fundamental principles of Life. It binds together the goal of health, approving the values of civil society and the protection of the patient's rights as the consumer of health services.

This model, centered by concept of life, considers health and disease to be natural phenomena. A disease is not violence against nature since along with the desire for Life (Eros), death instinct (Thanatos) is intrinsic to each individual and frequent explanation for many diseases and injuries. Thus, health and disease is the language with which Being "speaks" to us. It is necessary to create bases, relations and the structures, ethical invariants that organize our lives and communication with others (people, animals and environment), in order to understand it.

Nowadays, an individual component of health comes to the fore, as "benefit" for each individual; it largely depends on the existential constants as well as on the system of individual and social values. Failure or inability of the individual in the attempts to "transcend", comprehend and change the situation in terms of the highest ideals and values, at the physiological level often manifest itself as the breakdown of adaptive capacity and disease, and, at the level of communication with the medical staff, the inability or failure to protect their health and well-being.

The triumph of the principle of respect for individual autonomy turned out to be temporary. Both ethics of Hippocrates and absolutized individualism, ultimately, ignored obligations of medicine as a social institution towards the third party - the public. Thus, according to the "father of the patient's rights" George Annas, the main drawback of American pragmatic bioethics was its lack of global dimension and inadequate attention to improving public health [2].

One of the key ideas of global bioethics is reforming of medical field in order to create a reliable system for the *protection of public health on a global scale*. Potter's idea of combining medical and environmental ethics, medical and biological facts with universal values is reflected in this approach. In the wake of this approach, there emerges such a notion as *environmental public health* - the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and maintaining physical and mental health of the individual with the help of sanitary-epidemiological and other effective measures to protect the environment, develop social reforms and mechanisms which could ensure each member of the society standards of living necessary to maintain the health. In the 80s of the twentieth century there was shown the relationship between moral values, the ethical culture of the medical staff and the quality of health care. Subsequently, green clinics (based on environmental values), youth-friendly centers, Christian centers and medical clinics for feminist-oriented women were created.

Such "selection of partners", of course, does not solve all problems that arise at the intersection of the patient's and medical staff's values, but it helps to structure their relationships, create a comfortable for the patient situation in which the latter may feel more competent and knowledgeable, more free and active in communicating with the medical staff. All this is indicative of vitality of the ideals of global bioethics and public awareness of the importance of ethical and value sphere in the formation of the medical and social infrastructure and the preservation and development of the individual and public health.

D. Callahan believes that the concept of "*sustainable environment*" and "sustainable development" proposed by environmentalism may be useful in the development of the modern concept of medicine [3].

In his viewpoint, *steady-state medicine* should meet at least three conditions: 1) to provide each individual the opportunity (chance) functioning at good physical and mental level for the implementation of their life cycle; 2) to distribute medical resources among all members of society equally with no excessive abuse in favour of one group; 3) to have public support and strive to unite the short-and long-term goals to achieve individual and collective health. At the same time, sustainable medicine does not place unrealistic expectations on scientific progress and technological innovation.

Economically stable medicine recognizes the need to maintain a certain balance and constraints in the provision of health care resources. It assumes *adequate*, but not *optimal* quality of care and health status. This model focuses on the closed vital cycle of the man, not on the endless prolongation of life without taking in account its quality. The purpose of medicine should not be fighting against the risks of illness and death, but the adaptation and acceptance of those inevitable facts and factors of human life.

Bioethical model is based on a holistic view of health and disease as the poles of human existence, the ethical mechanisms and approaches to achieve health, combination of medical and environmental ethics, individual and social dimensions. Bioethical principles in medicine can weaken the determining power of medical practice and subpolitics in the life of the individual but increase his responsibility and his own participation in the vital issues relating to the health and well-being.

Medicine has not only a social context, but ecological one. Biomedical research, therapeutic practice, preventive, valeological and other its kinds cannot ignore the environmental and ecosphere context. All this requires a productive interaction between medical experts and environmentalists, bioethicists and philosophers. Global bioethics, unlike biomedical ethics, deals not only with professional standards, but with common significant global problems of mankind.

To summarize, we see the further development perspective in the harmonic associations of health, environmental and bioethical knowledge and ideas. Also we suppose that the process of reception and assimilation of global bioethical principles and values in Ukraine cannot be called simple. The difficulties are connected with the following: (1) the transitional nature of the Ukrainian economy, (2) a spiritual crisis caused by the assertion of private property as a social value, (3) the legacy of the administrative and command system of governance in medicine and collectivist ethics, (4) traditional medical paternalism and doctors' abuse of power over human lives, and (5) technocracy – the predominance of diagnosis over therapy and an attitude toward the patient as an object of medical intervention. At the current stage, Ukraine, like the majority of post-Soviet countries, is in the process of civil society formation. Under these circumstances, the role of bioethics, as a social institution, science and discipline that promotes formation of genuinely democratic relationships based on respect for human rights and freedoms as well as other living creatures and nature objects, is important. Problems of bioethics are becoming markedly interdisciplinary in nature [4].

Therefore, all new social institutions, governmental agencies, and community organizations are being involved in the solution of these problems. In the systems of Ukrainian health care global bioethics can and must become the main alternative to phenomena such as moral nihilism, consumerism, biologization, technocracy, and anthropocentrism. At the same time, there must be creative rethinking of its forms and methods based on the current political, economic, and social situation in Ukraine. The future of bioethics will be certainly determined by the nature, quality, and pace of democratic reforms in all spheres of Ukrainian society.

References

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