

Providing experienced gastroenterologists in Poland with comprehensive tools designed to assess nutritional status and implement optimal nutritional management strategies in patients with gastroenterological disorders

Project team POLSPEN (Polish Society for Parenteral, Enteral Nutrition and Metabolism)
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Description of the initiative

- **Background / context:** Nutritional therapy is an essential therapeutic approach in the management of gastroenterological diseases, which include a variety of conditions affecting the pancreas, liver, intestines, and malabsorption. Due to the significant impact of these conditions on patients' quality of life (QoL), identifying effective nutritional interventions is crucial to optimize treatment outcomes. In recent years, research has focused on the development of personalized nutrition plans to address the specific needs of patients with gastroenterological diseases.
- **Rationale:** To date, nutritional treatment courses have not been a mandatory component of gastroenterology or internal medicine specialization programs in Poland. Although there is a positive shift toward providing such training for young physicians, senior gastroenterologists have limited access to educational resources to enhance their nutritional knowledge and practice.
- **Objectives and scope:** The objective of this initiative is to elevate the proficiency of gastroenterologists in diagnosing malnutrition according to the Global Leadership Initiative on Malnutrition (GLIM) criteria, as well as in the inclusion and management of enteral and parenteral nutritional therapy. The above-stated procedures are crucial components of the management of malnutrition, and this initiative aims to provide gastroenterologists with the necessary expertise and resources to optimize the use of such therapies and improve patient outcomes.

Planned activities & deliverables

- **Outline the steps to be taken:** Conduct a series of webinars on the following topics: Diagnosis of malnutrition and sarcopenia, assessment of nutritional status, qualification for enteral and parenteral nutritional treatment, implementation of ESPEN standards in the field of gastroenterological diseases, organize workshops in centers that provide nutritional treatment to gastroenterological patients, after the training, assess the level of knowledge of the participants and obtain their opinions on the relevance of the program through tests and surveys, continue the training in subsequent years in collaboration with POLSPEN and the Polish Society of Gastroenterology – positive feedback is required.
- **What are the concrete deliverables of the project?** Upon completion of the project, the following future results are expected: The participants will have attended webinars and workshops focused on topics related to clinical practice. A 30-question knowledge test will have been completed by the participants to evaluate their understanding of the acquired knowledge. A survey assessing the potential relevance of the acquired knowledge in clinical practice will have been conducted among the participants. The survey results will have been analyzed to identify the areas where the acquired knowledge has the most potential for improving clinical practice. A follow-up online test will be conducted one year after the completion of the project to reassess the relevance of the course. The findings of the project will be propagated through publications and presentations at scientific conferences to share knowledge and best practices with the wider medical community. The project is expected to contribute to the continuous professional development of healthcare professionals and ultimately improve the quality of patient care.

What achievements are possible in the next 12 and 24 months? Conduct 5 additional webinars within the next 12-24 months for all participants of the project, organize additional workshops at the center providing nutritional treatment for gastroenterologists participating in the project – optional participation, seek opportunities to collaborate with POLSPEN and the Polish Society of Gastroenterology to advance the understanding and treatment of gastroenterological diseases through nutritional management, evaluate the effectiveness of the program through surveys and follow-up assessments to continually improve and tailor the training to meet the needs of the participants.

Resources & enablers

- **Describe personnel, financial needs:** The webinars and workshops will be led by POLSPEN specialists with extensive knowledge in the field of gastroenterology. 20,000 euros will be allocated for the organization of webinars and workshops. 5,000 euros will be allocated for software and statistical analysis to help manage and analyze the project data. 5,000 euros will be allocated for publication costs associated with propagating the results of the project.
- **Specify how the grant will be spent:** The grant will be used to organize and host webinars and workshops focusing on nutritional treatment in gastroenterology to enhance the practical knowledge of practicing gastroenterologists. The project will aim to improve the quality of care provided to patients with gastroenterological disorders by elevating the expertise of practicing gastroenterologists in Poland. The successful outcome of this project is guaranteed by a close partnership with the Polish Society of Gastroenterology

Results/outcomes & expected impact

How will the findings be implemented? The overall goal of the project is to improve patient care in gastroenterology by increasing the knowledge and proficiency of practicing gastroenterologists in the areas of malnutrition diagnosis, nutritional assessment, and treatment implementation. This improved expertise will enable gastroenterologists to provide more accurate diagnoses and effective interventions, leading to better patient outcomes. The project also aims to implement ESPEN standards that will standardize and improve the quality of care provided. Through the support of best practices in nutritional therapy, the project aims to improve the quality of life of patients. Furthermore, this project will not only improve the quality of care in Poland but also promote continuous professional development among gastroenterologists.

- **What factors will make it successful? How will this project advance patient care / contribute to optimal nutritional care? What makes the project innovative? Will the project be likely to influence national nutrition policy?** The project provides a unique opportunity for gastroenterologists who lack prior exposure to nutritional therapy to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. The collaboration with the Polish Society of Gastroenterology is a valuable channel to reach a large number of practicing gastroenterologists. This project will contribute to the advancement of national nutritional care by increasing the knowledge of gastroenterologists and promoting specialization in nutritional medicine, similar to anesthesiologists or surgeons. This will lead to better health outcomes for patients with gastroenterological diseases, and it will also pave the way for new and more effective treatment options. By strengthening expertise and promoting best practices, the project will have a lasting impact on the field of gastroenterology in Poland.

Is the project transferable to other settings / countries? The project's goal of elevating the knowledge and skills of gastroenterologists in malnutrition diagnosis, nutritional assessment, and treatment implementation is applicable across borders. The issue of malnutrition and the importance of appropriate nutritional treatment in patients with gastroenterological disorders are universal concerns that transcend national boundaries. Therefore, the knowledge and skills imparted through this project would be valuable to gastroenterologists in other countries.



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