Advancing Geriatric Nutrition: The Italian ICOPE Student Project

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Description of the initiative

- **Background / context:** Malnutrition is a key component of intrinsic capacity decline in older adults. While the WHO ICOPE framework provides a gold standard for integrated care, its application in Italy has been limited particularly in students.
- **Rationale for the initiative:** This project moves beyond mere screening. It uses the translated ICOPE manual as a foundational "clinical script" to teach medical and nursing students how to move from assessment to tailored nutritional strategy implementation within a multidisciplinary team.
- **Objectives and scope:** The project will have several practical objectives: 1. Integration of the Italian ICOPE nutritional module into the 4th-year Medical and 3rd-year Nursing curricula of Unicamillus University; 2. Hands-on workshops using ICOPE "Screening-to-Action" pathways for clinical nutrition; 3.Development of a digital "ICOPE-Italy" nutrition toolkit for students during clinical rotations.

Planned activities & deliverables

- **Outline the key steps of the project management plan:** 1: Curriculum Finalization (Months 1–6): (Months 7–12): Launching the first "Screening-to-Action" training workshops for senior students; 3: Clinical Application (Months 13–18): Students will apply the ICOPE nutritional pathways in geriatric wards under faculty supervision; 4: Evaluation & Reporting (Months 19–24): Final data collection on student competency and patient nutritional outcomes.
- **What are the concrete deliverables of the project?** The Italian ICOPE Nutrition Toolkit: A digital and physical clinical manual for students to implement nutritional care pathways; Training Assessment Reports: Data documenting the education of medical students and healthcare professionals. Quality assessment: The students, of at least 20 Italian universities, will be interviewed about the applicability and feasibility of the ICOPE.
- **What progress and achievements are possible in the next 12 and 24 months?** At 12 months: Completion of the first student cohort's training in 20 Italian Universities; Implementation: Successful rollout of the Italian ICOPE pathways in the pilot university setting. At 24 months: Clinical Impact: Quantifiable evidence of improved patient outcomes and clinical nutrition management; Sustainability: Integration of the program into the permanent medical/nursing curriculum.

Resources & enablers

- **Describe personnel, financial needs, and disclose any other fundings in relation to the project (confirmed, planned or potential)**: No actual funding sources are available. Funding is required for the high-quality printing of the manual, development of a digital screening toolkit, and workshop logistics. No personnel will be specifically enrolled for this project, but some figures will be involved other than the Project Lead, i.e., Clinical Supervisors: Physicians and senior nurses to oversee student-led nutritional assessments in wards; Data Analyst: To quantify patient outcomes and student competency metrics. Universities will be contacted using SINPE and SINPE young network.
- **Specify how the grant will be spent:** Implementation & Digital Tools (40% - €16,000); Educational Materials (30% - €12,000); Workshops & Training (20% - €8,000); Dissemination & Evaluation (10% - €4,000)
- **What factors will make the project successful?** National Endorsement: Full support from SINPE, ensuring the project aligns with national nutritional standards; Official WHO Framework.

Results, expected outcomes & impact

- **How will the findings be implemented?** We will implement the project adding, in the curricula of the students in nursing and medicine, the ICOPE methodology. The main results will be presented during the SINPE national congress.
- **How will this project advance nutritional care in clinical practice in one or more of the following areas of clinical nutrition:**
  - Strategies to implement and advance nutritional care in clinical practice
  - Education of medical students or healthcare professionals
- **Is the project transferable to other care settings / geographical regions?** This project is the perfect example of the possibility to be transferred in other geographical regions, mainly being an educative project for students.

X **Please tick to confirm the PEN letter of endorsement is attached. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.**