

The Principles of Medical Ethics In Healthcare of Georgia

Nino Chikhladze, Malkhaz Kereselidze

Medical-Diagnostic Center N 1, Tbilisi, Georgia

Abstract

The article deals with the significance of principles of medical ethics in the healthcare of Georgia, which is deeply rooted in the historical past of Georgia. It also throws some light on the philanthropy in the activities of some Georgian doctors and medical communities in the XIX-XX centuries.

Keywords: *healthcare, medical ethics, history of medicine*

The system of healthcare in Georgia was laid foundation in the 19th century, though the principles of medical ethics and deontology are deeply rooted in the historical past of Georgia. In the 19th century Georgian doctors received high medical education in Europe, and then came back home and not only introduced there traditions and ideas of the European medicine and ethics, but frequently developed them creatively. From practicing doctors it is possible to mention the whole number of remarkable representatives-doctors with strong feeling of calling of the doctor, the humane attitude towards the patients and self-sacrifice.

In first half of the 19th centuries in Georgia ten people received high medical education, from them Zakaria Zubalashvili (1810-1877) was distinguished with strong feeling of humanism. In 1835 has graduated from the Medical Faculty of the Leipzig University. In 1836 passed examinations at Derpt University and received the right on doctoring.

After coming home he began working in province where there was an acute need for the medical service.

During the 19th century epidemics of plague, cholera, smallpox spread in Georgia. In the first half of 19th century epidemics of plague and cholera was more frequent. According to the materials of the central historical archive of Georgia, Zakaria Zubalashvili

gratuitously served patients from 1937 during epidemics of plague and cholera, and since 1939 he supervised the organization of antiepidemic activities in the villages of Tbilisi province.

Zakaria Zubalashvili's activities were connected with the most dangerous places. All this was not caused by expectation of compensation, but it was the outcry of his heart and soul.

Zakaria Zubalashvili's huge merit lies in the creation of the Caucasian Imperial Medical Society (1864 c.), which was not only a scientific organization, but also the association interested in questions of public character, such as public healthcare, public sanitary and hygiene, social diseases, sanitary education, etc.

In the first year of the work of the Caucasian Imperial Medical Society the question about opening a clinic in Tbilisi was raised and in 1867 c. on the initiative of the mentioned society an ambulance station together with a drugstore was established. In the ambulance station, members the Caucasian Imperial Medical Society received free-of-charge medical treatment during 20 years.

From the second half of 19th century, the number of the Georgian doctors who had received high medical education sharply increased. By the end of 19th century their number reached 100. Some of them devotedly

protected the principles of medical ethics and deontology.

In 1864 Vasil Gamrekeli (1860-1916) graduated from the medical faculty of the Moscow University. During epidemics he provided the population with medical aid.

Dimitri Nazarishvili (1854-1927) graduated from the medical-surgical academy of St. Petersburg. In Kutaisi has founded the first ambulance station where he treated patients free-of-charge.

In 1878 Giorgi Tarsaidze (1857-1904) graduated from the medical faculty of the Kharkov University. In 1892 on his initiative the clinic of eye diseases with free-of-charge treatment was opened.

Samson Topuria (1853-1904) at first graduated from the faculty of natural sciences in Odessa, in 1886 medical faculty at the Kharkov University. After returning home he worked in public organizations. He gave free treatment to all the famous Georgian public figures, especially to those who were in difficult material conditions.

In 1890 together with Dimitri Nazarishvili he established first in the Western Georgia, namely in Kutaisi private hospital with several specialized departments, including first reotgenological room. There were several rooms for the poor, where they were given free treatment.

In 1884 David Gedevanishvili (1858-1937) graduated from the medical faculty of the Moscow University. During his activities in Tbilisi he served free-of-charge the pedagogical personnel of the Georgian grammar school and actors of the opera.

In 1893 Konstantine Mikaberidze (1866-1945) graduated from the army medical college of St. Petersburg. Having returned home he began to work as a doctor in Poti where he opened an ambulance station and a hospital. During four years (1908-1912) he served 8519 patients free-of-charge.

In Georgia the names of Mikheil Tsiskarishvili (1859-1923), Antimoz Gamkrelidze (1825-1893), Abel lashvili (1870-1921) are associated with humanism and charity in the medical field. Newspaper "Iveria" wrote: "...the number of patients cured by them free of charge is enormous. The whole population respects them for being extremely responsible".

With particular respect and love among people and medical society Ivane Gomarteli (1875-1938) was distinguished. He graduated from the medical faculty of the Moscow University in 1899. During the period of his activities he received many patients free of charge. He

visited different regions of Georgia, where he gave free medical treatment to the population. In 1904 newspaper "Iveria" wrote that"... he deserved much love on the side of the people; he did not receive money from the patients, and bought medications for the extremely poor.

In the 90s of XX c. market mechanisms operated in the healthcare system of Georgia. Free medical service was cancelled. Within the conditions of economic crisis because of absence of doctor's payment the population could not turn to the medical institutions. It was exactly in this period that treatment free of charge became acute again. As a result of such approach of doctors nowadays many patients were given free medical treatment.

Since 1996 twice in a year, famous specialists of Tbilisi State Medical University give free medical service to different regions of Georgia. For instance, in 1996 during three weeks' time, the mentioned specialists visited the region of Tsageri, where 38 operations were undergone; up to 1500 patients were examined. Besides that free medications were distributed among the population.

The expedition, arranged in the mountains revealed goiter among significant number of the population. The staff of the pharmaceutical department made "anastrumini" pills on their initiative and distributed them for free among the mountain population.

In 1999 similar missions were conducted in Kakheti, Dusheti. In Kakheti 26 professors and teachers gave free medical service to the population. As a result up to 700 patients were examined and correspondingly diagnosed. Free medications of up to 35000 dollars were distributed.

In the same year the association of Georgian ophthalmologists arranged humanitarian action in Racha, Samegrelo, Guria, Kakheti, Samachablo. The ophthalmologists examined the local population and gave appropriate free treatment. Some operations were undergone locally. The doctors ascribe this fact not to the philanthropy but to the national deontological traditions of the Georgian people. Philanthropy has not lost its vitality even today.

Ethical and legal code of relationship between a patient and a doctor is a dynamic, constantly changing, developing category, which reflects the level of conscious development in this or that social formation. As the history of social development reveals, the past values are not lost and they are passed from one generation to another in the form of experience from the previous centuries. That happens to be the source for the formation of new generations of doctors. This primarily concerns deontological and moral

requirements of ethics, which were created during the centuries and which must become a guide for every doctor in their professional spheres.

Thus, in the deontological practice of Georgian medicine treatment with payment was opposed to free treatment,

which constituted the accepted form of the medical service and human component; Georgian people during their history of many centuries maintained and in the case of necessity still use the traditions of medical, ethic and deontological principles in medicine, which are based on charity, mercy and philanthropy.

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Принципы медицинской этики в здравоохранении Грузии

Нино Чихладзе, Малхаз Кереселидзе

Лечебно-диагностический центр № 1, Тбилиси, Грузия

Р Е З Ю М Е

Обсуждаются принципы медицинской этики в здравоохранении Грузии, в том числе в деятельности отдельных врачей и медицинских коллективов в XIX-XX вв.

Ключевые слова: *здравоохранение, медицинская этика, история медицины*