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## **CURRENT PRIORITY AREAS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICINE**

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Modern society is rapidly changing under the influence of scientific and technological progress. The lifestyle of millions of people is changing, which directly affects the state of their health. To maintain their health at the proper level, it is necessary to develop medicine and solve the existing problems

One of the current priorities in medicine (including Belarus) is the development of primary care. At the heart of primary care should be the concept of preventive medicine. The benefits associated with preventive medicine are considerable. Firstly, there is no need to use any resources for treatment. Secondly, the individual can continue working and contributing to the economy. Moreover, prevention is a key to prolonging people's life and its quality. Due to the changing age structure of the population and increasing life expectancy, it is important that prevention should have a high priority in primary care.

Other important priorities include quality and accessibility of medical care, maternal and child health protection, sanitary and epidemiological welfare of the population and its future generations, improving the efficiency of the health care system functioning.

Targeting two disease linked behaviors are offering the society significant benefits in human and economic terms. The first of these is tobacco smoking, causing high mortality through lung cancer and vascular disease as well as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The second one is consuming (eating) too many fatty and sugary foods and not exercising which is one of the main causes of diabetes. According to the WHO, diabetes is likely to be one of the most serious threats to human health in the 21-th century.

Hospital services are the primary way of providing specialist care, and occasionally the main way of health care provision. However, too much emphasis on in-patient care is linked to problems such as unnecessarily high bed capacities, low cost efficiency, bad integration with other services, unsatisfying treatment pathways and low-quality care. The solution is to decrease the number of patients who need hospitalization by shifting in-patient examinations and treatments into day surgery and ambulatory care settings. It would result in concentration of clinical staff's attention on complicated cases which increases the quality of treatment and also reduces costs spent onto having extra bed capacity.

Mental health is a sector that receives less attention than others, frequently resulting in vulnerable patients enduring long waiting times, and overburdened health care professionals. In addition to the negative effects on individuals, this also increases societal costs. The main policy aim in the area of mental health is typically to decrease waiting times, alongside preventing mental health problems, disorders and suicides, especially among children and teenagers, who are considered to be a vulnerable group.

Thus, the implementation of the abovementioned objectives will provide innovative and intensive development of health care, stimulate research and production activities and improve the quality of medical services.