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**ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL READINESS FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AMONG
GRADUATES IN SPECIALITY 223 NURSING: THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES
AND THEIR PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION**

Introduction. An important criterion for a medical and pharmaceutical specialist is enhancing their professional readiness through developing and improving the professional system of education. This is achieved by introducing educational reforms into the network of institutions that train specialists in the field of study 22 Healthcare. The key to fostering professional readiness is advancing communication between professional colleges and higher education institutions, information support, postgraduate training (continuous professional education) of teachers and graduates, and adaptation to new market conditions.

Purpose. The purpose of the article is to analyze legislative and regulatory documents, scientific and pedagogical literature on the problem outlined and

to check the form of potential professional readiness of future specialists in speciality 223 Nursing.

Methods. In the course of research, the following general scientific methods were employed: study, analysis, generalization, and systematization of archival sources, scientific-pedagogical, and methodological literature, normative legal documents, periodicals, Internet resources. Practical experience of Cherkasy Medical Academy was used to distinguish specific features of training specialists in speciality 223 Nursing. The results of the research on developing professional readiness of graduates are substantiated and graphically symbolized.

Results. Based on the study, it can be concluded that continuous professional education shapes a competitive and sought-after specialist in

the labor market; medical and pharmaceutical training is a type of professional education that includes a system of knowledge, skills, worldview and behavioral features of the individual; the main components of enhancing professional readiness of graduates are clinical training, innovative teaching methods, support of graduates in the workplace, self-education, motivation, willingness for continuous training and professional growth. Most important in the structure of professional readiness is the psychological readiness of graduates for future occupation, which is determined by the mindset of the psyche, spiritual forces of a specialist to solve professional problems and perform professional duties. There have been distinguished two basic types of readiness: potential professional readiness and direct readiness. In an educational institution, potential professional readiness is developed through a system of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Originality. The study possesses scientific originality since it analyzes the questionnaire of the graduate students of speciality groups 223 Nursing (bachelor's degree of higher education), in order to determine the degree of importance of mastering professional skills for successful professional activity, and assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities by graduates, necessary in the future for effective completion of professional tasks.

Conclusion. The results of the study indicate that nursing as a speciality gradually occupies a stable place in Ukraine in the structure of higher education training since it is interesting and promising for young people. Most graduates are satisfied with the quality of education that meets their needs and expectations. Professional training, which graduates obtain, is multilateral, which will allow them to engage in various activities in the future. The discrepancy between the average value and the level research skills indicates that when designing a curriculum of this speciality, special attention should be paid to the disciplines that form research professional competencies. The implication for further research in this field is developing educational programs to improve the research readiness of applicants during their study at an educational institution.

Keywords: professional education; professional readiness; medical and pharmaceutical education; nursing.

Formulation of the problem. At present, the system of higher and pre-higher medical and pharmaceutical education in Ukraine is undergoing reformatory changes in order to get adjusted to new market conditions. It is well known that the task of modern educational institutions is to train graduates who are able to quickly adapt to changes in the labor market. Thus, medical and pharmaceutical educational institutions should train multidimensional specialists, because specialization leads to narrow professional consciousness. Such a specialist in a market economy is socially defenseless, since any change of work requires retraining. The educational reform is currently taking place

in the context of the financial crisis and is already forcing educational institutions to take effective measures.

First of all, it is necessary to reform the economy of medical and pharmaceutical education, for which state standards and funding standards should be introduced, to guarantee the availability of education, to bring the structure of training specialists in line with the demand structure, to move to targeted financing of education.

At the same time, the education system should be restructured, alongside the development of various and variable educational programs, the sought-after solution of deformations in the placement of higher and pre-higher education institutions and network optimization. This requires an inventory of the education system and the needs of educational institutions, determining the demand of the population for education. Improving the content of education is designed to ensure the continuity of educational standards at all levels of training, to work out a unified educational program in order to develop a system of requirements for training and retraining graduates, to improve the quality and orientation of education, to create a mechanism for its continuous renewal and development.

Professionalism becomes an important criterion for a specialist, so one of the main tasks is to increase the efficiency of education. Reforming the education system involves advancing definite skills and retraining in order to effectively implement socio-economic reforms, providing information support for education, developing the relationship between higher and pre-higher education and strengthening human resources. Training specialists in colleges of a new type and developing communication of professional colleges with higher education institutions (universities, academies) becomes the key to enhancing professional readiness of applicants. This embraces curator activities and staff management, scientific-pedagogical and methodical work of college teachers, conducting improvement cycles for teachers of medical and pharmaceutical colleges through the faculties of higher postgraduate education, devising curricula in medical and pharmaceutical colleges with possible admission of graduates to the second year of study in higher medical and pharmaceutical institutions.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Improving professional competencies through continuity of education makes the employee competitive and in demand in the labor market, which, in turn,

is beneficial for all participants in this process – the state as a subject is interested in the longer labor activity of its citizens, employers for whom professional skills of employees are the key to success of the enterprise, and first of all, for the person whose education will be an indicator of his social status and well-being, and the society as a whole. It should be noted that the successful implementation of the concept of continuous education largely depends on solving a whole range of problems – political, economic, legal, financial – and at the same time contributes to the modernization of professional education.

The need to improve the quality of continuous professional education is highlighted in the main provisions of the National Doctrine of Education Development of Ukraine in the XXI century. One of the most important tasks of the educational policy of the state is to find ways of specialists' professional growth and manage their cognitive activity. Considerable experience in researching this issue, accumulated in the scientific pedagogical and medical literature, emphasized the importance of continuous vocational education and professional readiness of specialists.

Specifically, T. Gorpinich in the work *System of Basic Concepts in the Context of Medical Education Research* defines medical education as "one of the types of professional education." The author underlines the opinion that "for successful study of any educational system, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the basic concepts", especially since the medical industry and medical education belong "to those areas of human knowledge in which clarity and understanding of these concepts play an important role" [1, p. 20]. In the Encyclopedia of Professional Education edited by S. Batyshev, the term "professional education" is interpreted as "professional training" and is defined as "a set of special knowledge, skills and abilities, qualities, work experience and norms of behavior that provide a possibility of successful work in a particular profession; the process of notifying students of relevant knowledge and skills" [2, p. 1182].

R. Gurevich under professional education understands the "system of knowledge, skills, abilities, traits of creative activity of the worldview and behavioral qualities of an individual, which are determined by the requirements of society to the workers of the relevant qualification and profile; efforts of both teachers and students in educational institutions that provide professional education of the relevant level should be directed to their achievements" [3, p. 28].

Researchers S. Sisoeva and I. Sokolova note that "professional education is based on general education and provides training of workers of higher and secondary qualifications, workers' frames; it is carried out in higher and secondary specialized educational institutions, vocational schools, at professional courses, and via training at a workplace [4, p. 308]. I. Sokolova pinpoints the importance of the impact of global processes on the development of medical education and the change of the paradigm regarding the value benchmarks of continuous professional development and considers the internationalization and standardization of medical education an important condition for quality assurance [5].

According to T. Desyatov, there is a certain discrepancy between the terms "professional education" and "professional training": "Professional training is not accompanied by an increase in general educational level of students, but is carried out in order to train how to perform a certain type of work." Contrastively, professional education, as the scholar asserts, is "the process and outcome of mastering a certain level of knowledge, abilities and skills, norms and values of a particular profession with simultaneous acquisition of general culture" [6, p. 17].

Y. Grishchuk underscores the expediency to focus of professional education on the comprehensive development of the individual, since "a highly qualified specialist, his professionalism is the key to the wide and effective use of the latest high-tech information technologies, improving the welfare of the population, ensuring the economic stability of the country" [7, p. 20].

N. Sapelnikova and G. Reshetova indicate the lack of proper professional orientation as the reason for the contradiction "between the needs of the labor market and the actual level of professional training of specialists", which leads to insufficient qualifications of graduates, non-compliance with the requirements of professional activity and an increase in unemployment [8, p. 919].

Doctor F. Gutierrez, taking into account global world changes, considers it expedient to prepare medical workers for transition to a new world order. Analyzing the extensive practical experience of many universities in the world, the scholar names three main components relevant for enhancing professional readiness of graduates: clear pathways for clinical education, innovative teaching methods – widespread and appropriate use of modeling (simulation medicine application), reliable tools for assessing the quality of education [9].

M. Merga believes that complete professional readiness for work of graduates depends not only on educational institutions, but also on greater support for graduates in the workplace, their mentoring and constant professional growth [10].

Y. Hur, A.R. Cho prove the importance of integrating the career coaching system into an official training program for medical students, which increase the professional readiness of graduates. The right career decision will satisfy the personal quality of working life and improve the effectiveness of their duty, which will eventually improve the quality of health care [11].

A. Bartosiewicz with co-authors, exploring the readiness of Polish nurses for study and development, and factors that define this readiness, reveals that the constant development of medical sciences and the implementation of new methods of diagnosis and treatment with the use of specialized equipment implies that knowledge and skills obtained during a course of study is currently insufficient. This obliges medical staff to improve their professional qualifications in order to provide the adequate quality of medical services through self-education, motivation, readiness for continuous training and professional development [12].

K. Platonov, in his concept of the structure of a personality, identifies the term "professional readiness" along with psychological and moral readiness. He defines it as a subjective state of a personality who considers himself capable and prepared for relevant professional activities and strives to work in this field [13, p. 105]. According to the scholar, professional readiness has the following interrelated parts: potential readiness for relevant activities, which appears due to the system of stable, static components – knowledge, abilities, professional skills, and direct readiness as a state of functional mindset of the specialist's psyche to solve specific problems in appropriate circumstances and conditions.

The purpose of the study. The research presented in the article and analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature in this field corresponds to the guidelines "Regulations on the system of continuous professional development of specialists in the field of health care" (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 302) and implies enhancing potential professional readiness of future specialists in speciality 223 Nursing.

Research methods. Research of theoretical principles and their practical implementation in the process of developing professional education and professional

readiness of students of speciality 223 Nursing has been carried out on the basis of general scientific methods:

1) theoretical:

– *generalization of archival sources, scientific research in the areas of training specialists with medical and pharmaceutical education, legislative and regulatory acts;*

– *analysis and synthesis* – to distinguish specific features of training specialists in higher and pre-higher education;

2) empirical: preconceptual and bibliographic – study, systematization and classification of the source base (scientific-pedagogical, methodological literature, normative legal documents, periodicals); Internet resources, practical experience of Cherkasy Medical Academy.

3) mathematical method: *statistical* – to substantiate and graphically symbolize the results of studying how to enhance graduates' professional readiness in speciality 223 Nursing.

Presentation of the main material. The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of March 28, 2018, No. 302, approved the "Regulations on the system of continuous professional development of specialists in the field of healthcare" and identified the main directions and objectives of the abovementioned system of continuous professional education of medical and pharmaceutical specialists. Moreover, it formulated the requirements for their certification and professional level, and types of educational institutions (higher education, postgraduate education, research institutions, health care institutions), on the basis of which training is carried out on specialization cycles, thematic improvement, information courses and internships. The Resolution states that the professional development of medical and pharmaceutical specialists is "a continuous process of training and improving professional competencies of specialists after obtaining their education in the field of healthcare", and "includes participation in the process of formal and informal education in the field of healthcare" [14].

The issues concerning the quality of professional education and professional readiness of healthcare professionals are also highlighted in the Strategy for the Development of Medical Education in Ukraine (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of February 27, 2019, No. 95-p), the first document in the history of Ukraine, which provides a comprehensive approach to qualitative changes in the education of healthcare professionals. The goal of the Strategy is to "build a high-quality

medical education system in Ukraine provide the healthcare sphere with medical workers with a high level of training", which can be achieved through improving the quality of education, reforming postgraduate education, effective financing and management, developing academic culture in medical education, raising the quality of scientific research. The result of the Strategy implementation "will be the improvement in the quality and competitiveness of medical education in Ukraine" [15].

Consequently, if professional education is an activity on purposeful and systematic acquisition of professional knowledge, abilities and skills in higher education and professional education institutions, then medical and pharmaceutical education for all features can also be considered professional education: 1) it is completed by obtaining a certain educational and professional qualification, pursuant to the speciality and level of education; 2) systematization of medical (nursing) and pharmaceutical education is built on the degree principle; 3) the ultimate goal of professional medical and pharmaceutical education is to achieve a specialist's high professional competence.

Analysis of scientific sources has shown that in the structure of professional readiness most important is the psychological readiness of graduates of educational institutions, which is determined by the mindset of their psyche, spiritual forces of a specialist to solve professional problems and perform professional duties. Enhancing students' readiness for research activities is considered as bringing into an active state all psychophysiological systems of the body necessary for successful implementation of mental activity [16]. Professional readiness can also be ensured through applying a student-centered approach to the organization of the educational process, which significantly effects personal development of students [17]. The readiness of future nurses for professional self-realization will be more effective if special pedagogical conditions are implemented in the educational process [18].

Consequently, professional readiness, on the one hand, is characterized by the manifestation of motivational settings; on the other hand, it has its own specific features and is stipulated by the attitude of an individual to the profession, to himself as a specialist, by professional competencies, emotional and strong-willed readiness, and a socio-professional status. At the same time, professional skills (a high level of knowledge, skills, professionally important properties of an individual, which ensure his success in this professional activity) is the basis for

psychological professional readiness. To understand what type of professional knowledge, skills and abilities should be implanted in applicants of speciality 223 Nursing after graduation from higher and pre-higher medical education institutions, it is necessary to analyze the current standard of higher education of the first (bachelor) level of higher education in the field of knowledge 22 Health Care in speciality 223 Nursing, which reflects the requirements of the state and the labor market to the competencies of graduates. It should be noted that the standard of education for the degree of professional junior bachelor is still under development.

The procedure for organizing the educational process in speciality 223 Nursing is determined by the standard. It is a set of mandatory requirements for education of a certain level and/or to the profession and speciality approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. The theoretical content of the subject area of the standard is knowledge on public health, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of human diseases at the individual, family and population levels.

The professional activity of bachelors of nursing, who have mastered the program in this speciality, ensures health care of citizens by providing qualified nursing care in accordance with the established requirements and standards in the field of health care, organization and management of nursing structural units in healthcare institutions, implementation of all types of nursing activities and nursing interventions [19].

After graduation, bachelors are supposed to be ready for nursing clinical practice, organizational, managerial, pedagogical, and research activities. The bachelor's program amounts to 120-240 ECTS credits (depending on the previous level of education), training is carried out in full-time and evening forms. The nursing bachelor's program in a particular institution of higher education is formed depending on the focus on specific types of future professional activity: research (pedagogical) or applied (practically oriented). Having mastered the program, graduates must have integrated, general and special competencies. The list of special (professional) competencies that the applicant will master in the process of obtaining higher education is determined by the types of professional activities on which the bachelor's educational program of the relevant institution is focused. According to the education standard, a list of com-

petencies can be supplemented following the guidelines for future professional activities.

The bachelor's program consists of two cycles and contains both the normative (mandatory) part and the variable, which provides the possibility of specialized training within the framework of one speciality.

Specifically, Cycle 1 – General Preparation – contains:

1) normative part – a set of disciplines of this part is mandatory, does not depend on the direction of the program, is determined by the educational institution and necessarily contains such disciplines as philosophy, history and culture of Ukraine, foreign language, natural and fundamental disciplines;

2) variable part – these disciplines determine orientation of the training program (a choice of the program profile is made by students; after choosing a profile, disciplines of the variable part become mandatory for assimilation).

The volume of the first cycle is 90 ECTS credits, which is equivalent to 37.5% of the total program; the regulatory part is 69 ECTS credits (76% of the total block volume), the variable part is 21 ECTS credits (24% of the total block volume);

Thus, the theoretical basis of applicants studying under this program depends on the desire of applicants to study certain disciplines and their vision of their future professional activities.

Cycle 2 – Special (Professional) Training – comprises:

1) normative part – a set of professional clinical disciplines is determined by the educational institution;

2) variable part – includes disciplines of free choice.

Cycle volume is 133 ECTS credits, which is equivalent to 55% of the total program; normative part is 111 ECTS credits (80% of the total block volume), the variable part is 22 ECTS credits (20% of the total block volume);

Practical Training embraces educational and final practice in the fundamentals of nursing, workplace practice and pre-diploma practice. The choice of types of practices is carried out by the educational institution and fully corresponds to the direction of the implemented program. The volume of credits of educational and final nursing practice is included in the total number of credits of professional training disciplines and constitutes 75% of the total volume. Workplace practice and pre-diploma practice volume is 11 ECTS credits, which is 5% of the total program.

Thus, students, who master the educational program, obtain complete, advanced practical training, master a necessary set of skills of professional readiness. However, the process of obtaining basic higher nursing education is only one of the first steps on the way to becoming a highly qualified nursing specialist. It is extremely important after receiving a diploma to find your place in a professional environment in which yesterday's graduate will want to develop.

The first graduation of bachelors of nursing took place in 1997. The term of their training was four years. However, during this time in Ukraine, there were no official regulatory acts, which defined the place and role of bachelors of nursing as a component of the health care system, as well as their further influence on the development of nursing. As part of the study of the potential readiness of bachelors of nursing for professional activity, a questionnaire was conducted for graduate students in 2020 (full-time and evening forms of study), studying in the speciality 223 Nursing (bachelor's degree) at Cherkasy Medical Academy.

The survey was conducted among graduate students who studied:

– on the basis of complete general secondary education – the term of study is 4 years;

– on the basis of the educational qualification level “the junior specialist” who studied under the shortened training program – 1 and 2 years in full-time education, and 1.5 and 2.5 years in full-time evening education.

A total of 93 respondents took part in the survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine the degree of importance of mastering certain professional skills for successful professional activities and assessing graduates' knowledge, skills and abilities necessary in the future for the qualitative performance of professional tasks.

The questionnaire was developed on the basis of the current standard of higher education and consisted of two parts.

In the first part, general information about full-time and part-time (evening) students was collected. The respondents were distributed by age in the following fashion: under 25 years – 20 (21.5%) persons; aged 25-25 years – 16 (17.2%); 26-30 years – 9 (9.6%); 31-34 years – 12 (12.9%); above 35 years – 36 (38.8%).

Thus, about 51.7% of graduates – persons aged 30 to 45 years, that is, they are able-bodied personnel potential in nursing (the head and senior nurses of health care

institutions), able to independently cope with professional tasks, applying the knowledge gained in the educational institution. Moreover, they will be able to pass on the accumulated experience to future generations.

The main share of respondents (56%) have diplomas of junior specialist, 20.4% have complete higher education, of those, 49 persons (69%) have work experience in healthcare institutions (Fig. 1, 2). However, about 23.6% of the respondents are students who came to study immediately after school.

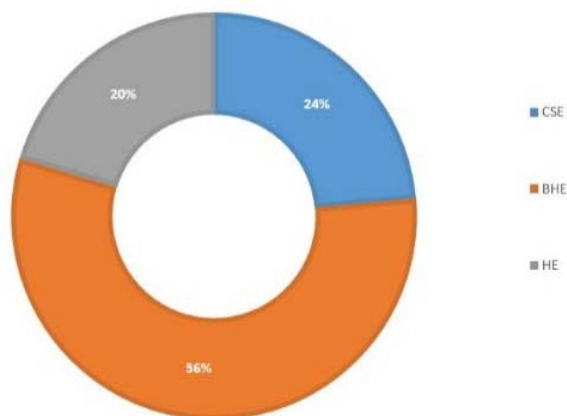


Figure 1. Distribution of the respondents by the level of education, in percentage

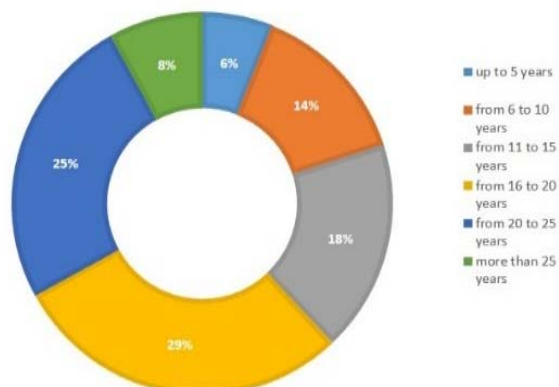


Figure 2. Distribution of the respondents by work experience

The results of the survey indicate, firstly, that nursing as a speciality gradually occupies a stable place in Ukraine in the structure of training specialists with higher education, and, secondly, that it is interesting and attractive for young people, who, choosing it, understand how they will continue to develop within the chosen professional path.

According to the survey, 81% of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of education received and believe that the knowledge gained during the years of study at the Academy will help to provide better assistance to patients (Figure 3).

Thus, most students during their studies received the basis necessary for future

professional activity that meets their needs and expectations. This also indicates that students are ready to either start or continue their professional development within the framework of the chosen speciality.

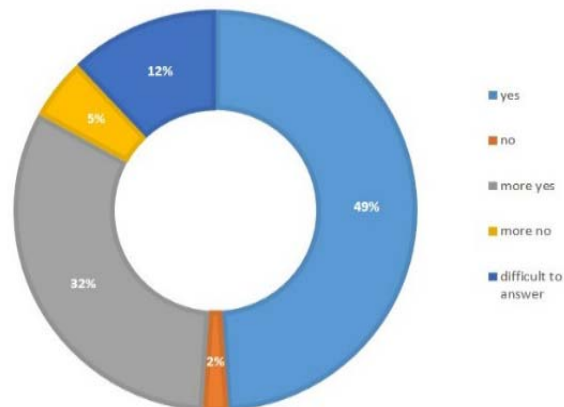


Figure 3. Respondents' answers to the question: "Does the received education contribute to better provision of medical services?"

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 4 blocks, each of which corresponded to one of the types of future professional activity. In each block there were statements representing professional tasks that are found in the process of work. The respondents were asked to rate the proposed statements on a three-point scale (1 – minimum value, 3 – maximum) in two parameters: 1) the importance of mastering a specific experience presented in the form of a professional task (statement) for the successful implementation of a particular type of professional activity; 2) a level of this acquired skill.

Next, the average indicators were calculated basing on which the following conclusions were made: in each block, the overall average assessment of the importance of mastering skills by the respondents was higher than the real level of these skills. It should be pointed out that skills acquisition rates for all 4 blocks were more than 1.5 points (approaching 2), which with a 3-point evaluation system indicates training above average for each type of professional activity. The smallest difference between the overall average of the importance of learning skills and the level of real acquisition of them turn out to be for nursing clinical practice; further in order of difference growth are located: organizational and managerial activities, pedagogical activities, research practice. Since the difference in the first three types of professional activity is large, we can conclude that the professional training received by bachelors of nursing is multilateral, which will allow in the future to engage in various activities. A detailed analysis of each block revealed that the greatest discrepancy

between the average value of this skill and the level of mastering it is characteristic of research activities. So, if we consider bachelors of nursing as a future scientific potential, special attention should be paid to the disciplines that form research professional competencies.

Conclusions and prospects of further research. The analysis of scientific and pedagogical sources, the regulatory framework, the results of the questionnaire of students-graduates of the speciality 223 Nursing, on enhancing potential professional readiness among them, allows drawing the following conclusions and inferences: 1) state standards of education reflect the procedure for advancing special competencies among graduates, program results of training and state requirements for specialists, as well as their place in the labor market; 2) there are the potential professional readiness and the direct readiness; applicants form the potential professional readiness in the educational institution; 3) one of the components of professional readiness is psychological readiness for a speciality, the basis of which is professional orientation and professional skills, determined by professional competencies; 4) the effectiveness of educational and cognitive activity fosters professional development of the future specialist within the framework of the chosen speciality.

Further implications of the research imply devising educational programs in order to improve the research readiness of applicants during their studies at an educational institution.

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ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ТА ПРАКТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ РОЗВИТКУ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ОСВІТИ Й ФОРМУВАННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ГОТОВНОСТІ У ВИПУСКНИКІВ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТІ 223 МЕДСЕСТРИНСТВО

Анотація. Важливим критерієм для фахівця медичного та фармацевтичного спрямування є сформованість професійної готовності випускників шляхом розвитку та вдосконалення системи професійної освіти. Це досягається впровадженням освітніх реформ у мережу закладів, що здійснюють підготовку фахівців із галузі 22 Охорона здоров'я. Запорукою формування професійної готовності є розвиток зв'язку фахових коледжів із закладами вищої освіти, інформаційна підтримка, післядипломна підготовка (неперервна професійна освіта) викладачів та випускників освітніх закладів, адаптація до нових ринкових умов. Метою статті є аналіз законодавчих й нормативно-правових документів, науково-педагогічної літератури з окресленої проблеми та перевірка сформованості потенційної професійної готовності в майбутніх фахівців спеціальності 223 Медсестринство. Результати дослідження свідчать про те, що: медсестринство як спеціальність поступово займає стійке місце в Україні в структурі підготовки кадрів з вищою освітою. Воно є цікавим і перспективним для молоді, більша частина випускників задоволені якістю отриманої освіти, яка відповідає їхнім потребам і очікуванням. Професійна підготовка, яку отримують випускники, є багатосторонньою, а відтак вона до-

зволяє у майбутньому займатися різною за змістом діяльністю. Медична й фармацевтична освіта є одними з видів професійної освіти; вони охоплюють систему знань, навичок, умінь, світоглядних і поведінкових якостей особистості тощо. Основними компонентами для поліпшення формування професійної готовності випускників є клінічна підготовка, інноваційні методи навчання, підтримка випускників на робочому місці, самоосвіта, мотивація, готовність до неперервного навчання та професійного розвитку. У структурі професійної готовності важливішою є психологічна готовність випускників освітніх закладів, яка визначається налаштованістю психіки, духовних сил фахівця на розв'язання професійних завдань і виконання професійних обов'язків. Розрізняють потенційну професійну готовність та безпосередню. У закладі освіти у здобувачів відбувається формування потенційної професійної готовності через систему знань, навичок і умінь.

Ключові слова: професійна освіта; професійна готовність; медична та фармацевтична освіта; медсестринство.

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