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## CHALLENGES FACED BY SPECIALISTS IN PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN MARTIAL LAW CONDITIONS IN UKRAINE

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**Abstract.** *Preventive medicine specialists must address numerous problems in order to preserve and enhance the health of Ukrainian children in the current period. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort by the Ukrainian government and international partners to support these professionals in their day-to-day work. The work is dedicated to exploring the challenges faced by specialists protecting the health of children during the state of martial law in Ukraine.*

**Key words:** *health of children and adolescents, full-scale hostilities on the territory of Ukraine*

### **Introduction.**

The ongoing war in Ukraine has resulted in significant challenges for the general population and professionals in the field of child and adolescent health. The challenges are multi-faceted, ranging from the direct impact of armed conflict on children's physical and mental health to the disruption of healthcare services and progressive difficulty in accessing healthcare and preventive measures. The war has displaced millions and disrupted healthcare services, particularly in conflict-affected areas where many hospitals and clinics have been damaged or destroyed. Furthermore, the conflict has increased levels of psychological distress and trauma among children, with many experiencing symptoms of mental health conditions. In addition, social and family ties were violated.

The study **aims** to explore the challenges facing child and adolescent health professionals in the state of martial law in Ukraine.

## **Materials and Methods.**

The study was conducted by drawing on various sources, including academic literature, government reports, and the experiences of professionals working in the field.

## **Results.**

With the start of full-scale hostilities on the territory of Ukraine in many regions, the most pressing challenge is access to healthcare services [1]. Unfortunately, child and adolescent health professionals face many barriers in providing life-saving health services to young people. In addition, the closure of schools and other public facilities has made it more challenging to provide preventive care and promptly identify and address health issues.

The combat operations in Ukraine have strained the country's healthcare system, leading to a lack of critical resources such as vaccines, medication, and medical equipment. This has made it difficult for child and adolescent health professionals to provide the level of care needed to meet the health needs of their patients.

The war and its consequences have also significantly impacted the mental health of children and adolescents in Ukraine. Many young people have been exposed to violence and trauma, and many children lost their homes. In addition, they were forced to flee the country, leading to a rise in mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Child and adolescent health professionals are often on the front lines of diagnosis and treating these conditions. Still, they face significant challenges in accessing the necessary resources and support to provide adequate care.

The war in Ukraine has also impacted the wider social determinants of health. For example, the displacement of millions of people has resulted in overcrowding and poor living conditions in refugee camps and other temporary housing solutions. This has increased the risk of infectious diseases, including respiratory infections, tuberculosis, and waterborne illnesses. Additionally, the conflict has disrupted access to education and other social services, exacerbating the social determinants of health and further compounding the challenges facing child and adolescent health

professionals.

Another challenge facing Ukraine's child and adolescent health professionals is the lack of funding and resources. The healthcare system in Ukraine has been underfunded for years, and the conflict has only exacerbated this issue. As a result, child and adolescent health professionals often work in under-resourced and understaffed facilities, which makes it difficult to provide high-quality care to their patients.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to mitigate the impact of the conflict on children's health through innovative approaches to service delivery and cross-sectoral collaboration. For example, telemedicine has been used to provide remote consultations and support to healthcare workers in conflict-affected areas. In addition, given the large number of psychologically traumatized people, opportunities have been created for accessible and affordable psychological assistance.

Research on the relationship between lifestyle and mental health proves that it is necessary to continue studying the impact of lifestyle on the mental health of schoolchildren during the war, taking into account the decrease in the duration of MVPA (Moderate to vigorous physical activity) in schoolchildren against the background of an increase in depressive indicators [2]. This will allow identifying risk groups and implementing comprehensive measures to help children adapt during humanitarian emergencies.

### **Conclusions.**

Child and adolescent health professionals in Ukraine face various challenges in martial law. These include issues with access to healthcare services, shortages of medical supplies and equipment, mental health issues, and funding and resource constraints. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort by the Ukrainian government and international partners to support these professionals in their day-to-day work.

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