Healthcare Training for the Greek Municipalities' Citizens in the Program of "Home Help" with the Medical Educational Web Sites

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INTRODUCTION

Today, the Internet is one of the most useful tools for information, education, business, and entertainment. It is one of the modern technology tools giving us many applications. One of the most important applications of the Internet is the health educational Web sites. These sites can be used not only by researchers but also by everyone easily taking important information for continuing self-training. In the division of public health, this part is very important. Medical Web sites give us access to information about our health or about prevention methods. In Greece today, there is a new 12-hour program offering home health help and care to citizens. This program is under the organization of the local municipalities and the affiliation of the Ministry of Health.

BACKGROUND

In Greece and especially in the agricultural municipalities, there are many old people who must have healthcare at their home. The Greek government established a serious program for public health. But still this program, after some years since the beginning of its application, continues with many problems. New technologies and the Internet may help local municipalities and their citizens.

The Home Help Care program was established by the ministry of Health in Greece to help people in Greece in their homes. For the application, there were about four to eight people working in the program with various levels of training but under the same direction in order to help people in their homes, giving them health and psychological help.

The administration, application, and recognition of the program Home Help is under the recognition of the Administration Work Group (AWG), which established it with the No.DY1d/oik. 10024/1.6.2001 recognition No. of the Government (FEK 726/τ.B/2001 paragraph 18 article 18 N. 2503/1997 (Government Newspaper FEK 107/rA/97) and still exists today (Moraiti, 2005).

This program offers a first-step healthcare to citizens, so it is important to help them use the contemporary technologies for self-training or for simple self-help and protection.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

There is an enormous number of programs today in the Greek Kapodestrian Municipalities. One very important program with many positive applications is the Home Help Care program. Many individuals can help themselves along with the affiliation and the help of Home Help Care program employees in the municipality. This research recognized the problems from the application of this program.

This research took part in western Greece. The employees of the program asked to help giving the questions to the citizens and taking back the answers. Then all the answers were organized carefully. There were many results with an important statistical study and many different diagrams. We were able to understand what happens with the program of Home Help Care and what we must do in order for this program to work more efficiently. In this research, there were many statistical tables and many more statistical diagrams, but we will present only a few of them.

ISSUES

The existing Greek geographical status today makes more difficult the application of healthcare, especially at the municipalities far away from the big cities or to the villages where there are many climatic problems that continue for many months per year.

The traditional way to offer help to people in various places makes the application of this program very difficult. By using the periodical visits in every home and spending much time for this either in transportation or staying in the same house for a long time, the program cannot work fast for a simple or combined health problem. People working in the program today are not able to visit all the persons once or more times per week because the number of them is very big and the claim for psychological help is bigger every day with various problems, especially with older persons. Sometimes they must work with the same person more than one time and for many hours.

The effort of employees at time management gives them the probability for more dangers driving many kilometers to every village far from the center, which happens every day.

There are only a few persons working in the program, less 4 and maximum 7 persons, offering home help and care. So it is very difficult for them to work every day personally with every citizen (Moraiti, 2005) They are not able to visit all the persons in their home in different villages many kilometres away. Another problem is that the official number of inducted persons in the program

asking for home help is very big in every municipality. This problem is bigger if someone works with people with different problems and more than three or four times per person. Especially if the people are over 60 years old, this is more difficult.

Sometimes they must visit and work with the same person for more than one time per week. This is what gives us the opportunity to claim that the IT technologies will help the program to continue with success. On the other hand, municipalities must work hard to induct new technologies and continue to the modern philosophy with many vital technical changes (Drougas, 2005b). Some of these changes are summarized in Table 1.

A network system will help people have access with the control center, even if they are many kilometers away from the center (Drougas, 2004). After searching the selected answers from the questions given to the people associated with the program, we can say that the most serious problems are summarized in Table 2.

All these results from the research give us the icon that the program today continues very slowly. Internet technologies and a self-training methodology program will help both employees and citizens in the next years with success. This will be a part of the applications of the contemporary network systems WAN and LAN, which will help citizens have local or national and

Table 2. Summary of the vital problems from the application

- The low level of the citizens education
- The big number of the new Kapodistrian municipalities with many villages many kilometers far
- The small number of the employees in the program
- The big number of the citizens served in the program
- The personal visit in every person
- The difference of the health problems
- Geographical problems
- More persons are older than 60 years old
- Telecommunications problems
- Economical and other time problems

Table 1. Summary of the technical changes in telecommunications in the municipality

- New connections in affiliation with the local telecom organizations or companies
- ISDN Networks
- LANs Local Area Networks
- WANs Wide Area Networks
- MANs Metropolitan Area Networks
- Internet TCP/IP
- Intranet communications
- Extranet communications
- VPN Virtual Private Networks

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