

NORTH-WESTERN RUSSIA AND THE NEIGHBOURING EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: COMPARISON OF MORTALITY INDICATORS AND THE ROLE OF HEALTHCARE

Alla Ivanova^{1,2}, Elena Zemlyanova²

1 – Institute of Socio-Political Research, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

2 - Federal Research Institute for Health Organization and Informatics of Ministry of Health of Russia

Background. The Russia's last decade was marked by priority investments in healthcare with less attention paid to unhealthy lifestyles; those aspects appeared on agenda only 3-4 years ago.

Objective: to test the hypothesis that healthcare factor plays crucial role in the Russian life expectancy loss.

Materials and methods. The model of avoidable mortality was used to analyze death causes related to insufficient diagnostics and treatment (healthcare factor), and causes associated with behavioral risks (lifestyle factor). To eliminate influence of geographical factors, regions of the North-Western Russia and neighboring European countries (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Norway) were selected as study objects. The latest available data from MDB and Health for all (2014) were applied. Calculations were made for ages 0-64 years.

Results. The study confirmed the conclusion that the higher is mortality level the stronger input of avoidable causes. In the developed countries under study the input adds up to 25-30% and about 40% in the Baltic states, and averages to about 50% in the North-Western Russia. Furthermore, it varies from 45% in St. Petersburg to 67% in Pskov and Novgorod regions. On average, two thirds of avoidable mortality are associated with lifestyle. Correlation of this component with mortality levels is not linear: with maximum in the regions with medium mortality levels and reducing both in more and less favorable regions. The structure of mortality preventable by control of risk factors also differs: from dominance of somatic pathologies to growing significance of external causes.

Conclusions. Healthcare does substantially contribute to mortality reduction however its role is not the leading one. The Russia's gap in life expectancy compared to European countries is mainly due to unhealthy lifestyle. Focus on reducing mortality from avoidable causes can accelerate life expectancy growth in Russia with due regard to control of healthcare expenditures.

Alla Ivanova – ivanova-home@yandex.ru

Elena Zemlyanova – zem_lena@mail.ru, zemlianova@mednet.ru