

**PEHPP 2019****Pedagogical Education: History, Present Time, Perspectives****TEACHING TEACHERS AND PARENTS OF CHILDREN ON A  
LONG MEDICAL TREATMENT**

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***Abstract***

This article discusses the problem of psychological and pedagogical assistance and professional development of teachers and parents of those children who are on long-term treatment in a hospital. Due to the peculiarity of living conditions, the psychological state and socialization of seriously and permanently ill children and their parents, there is some need to help teachers of hospital schools and parents interact with sick children and organize the educational process in a hospital. The article presents the experience of Moscow City Pedagogical University, which for several years has been engaged in the search for formats and technologies to provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to the above target groups, develop effective programs that contribute to the continued professional activities of sick children's parents, taking into account their life circumstances. The problems and issues that are relevant for both teachers and parents of sick children are indicated. The description of the already developed programs of formal and non-formal education of teachers and parents of children who are on long-term treatment in a medical institution is given. The technologies, methods and forms of conducting classes are described; the results of a sociological survey of teachers and parents are presented. The article summarizes the experience of training teachers and parents of children who are on long-term treatment in the Federal Scientific and Clinical Center (FNCC) named after Dmitry Rogachev and the Russian Children's Clinical Hospital (RCCH), using the resources of the "Teach& Know" project.

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**Keywords:** Hospital school, long-term ill children, training for teachers and parents, psychological and pedagogical support, professional retraining, tutor.



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## 1. Introduction

For modern pedagogical science, the problem of teaching and raising long-ill children is quite relevant. The number of children in this category is increasing, so it is important to create equal opportunities for successful learning and socialization for each child.

The awareness of the educational problems of the children undergoing long-term treatment in hospitals leads to the necessity to comprehend new approaches and practices for training teachers to organize the educational process of long-term sick children in a hospital as well as to provide psychological and pedagogical support for their parents.

## 2. Problem Statement

There exist a number of studies on the problem of training teachers and parents of the children who are on long-term treatment while getting them prepared to provide this category of students with psychological and pedagogical support. However, these practices are currently local, and the systemic work of comprehending the accumulated experience and studying this problem is just beginning. Studies have been conducted to identify the causes of the emotional burnout among teachers (Hargreaves et al., 2006; Savicheva, 2016), features of the emotional burnout syndrome among those teachers, who work in hospital schools, besides, they describe the experience aimed at the prevention of such burnout among teachers educating seriously ill children (Gaidomaschko & Katzova, 2019).

The analysis of these studies indicates that they mainly concern with the psychological state of teachers and parents of children with long-term illnesses as well as their support (Ivanova & Novogilova, 2019). Only a small number of works are devoted to the problem of training a teacher in organizing the educational process and interacting with long-ill children and their families (Gradunova, 2004). These works include certain recommendations. A few foreign and Russian studies relate to the problems associated with the teachers' training and professional development (Alisov, Ivanova, Kunitsyna, Surtaeva, & Frolova, 2018), with the development of their social and emotional competence (Alkhateeb1, Kraishan, & Salah, 2015) introducing requirements for teaching activities and the adoption of new roles by teachers (Hargreaves, 2000), with peculiarities of teaching children who are on long-term medical treatment (Vinokurova, 2016) as well as with the use of modern equipment when planning a lesson (Black-Hawkins, Florian, & Rouse, 2007).

The Hospital Organization of Pedagogues in Europe (HOPE) makes a significant contribution to the development of education of hospital schools teachers and parents of long-term ill children. The association of European hospital teachers includes 27 countries. The Russian Federation is represented in the association by the teachers of hospital schools participating in the "Teach& Know" project. Currently, 17 regional sites have been created and are actively developing under the "Teach& Know" project.

These days, a system of informal training for parents of long-term ill children is actively developing. The analysis of the official websites of public organizations, foundations dealing with the problems of sick children showed that they are currently conducting extensive educational and upbringing work with parents and specialists who are interested in gaining additional knowledge in this matter.

Volunteer organizations play an important role in the development of non-formal additional education for parents of children in difficult life situations, including those who have been long and seriously ill. On the website "Medical Volunteers" of the All-Russian Public Movement, they carry out great educational work; organize various training events, conduct face-to-face and correspondence courses.

An open group on Facebook named 'A book to help parents whose children have cancer' was created by the mother of a sick child who was diagnosed with leukemia in early childhood. In this group, parents whose children are ill discuss their problems and share their experience. It contains articles, videos, other materials from experts such as doctors, tutors, teachers working with sick children. This format of informal continuing education is becoming increasingly popular with parents. Currently, the group unites more than 400 participants who actively communicate with each other on a wide range of issues related to the treatment and education of sick children.

Recently the actively developing mobile applications have become very important for the informal education of parents whose children have long-term illnesses. For example, there is the World Health Organization's mobile application "Children in hospital", it allows you to obtain recommendations offline.

### **3. Research Questions**

The solution of the designated scientific problem involves answering the following questions:

- What are the most promising areas for training teachers and parents of children who are on long-term medical treatment in foreign and Russian practice?
- What technologies, methods, forms of education should be used in training teachers and parents of children undergoing long-term treatment?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Identification of effective teaching practices for teachers and parents of children with long-term illnesses, their psychological and pedagogical support, as well as a change in the parents' professional trajectory (a new qualification), while their activity is objectively impaired as a result of their life circumstances.

### **5. Research Methods**

In the course of the study, the following methods were used: analysis of the literature on the research problem, regulatory legal documents; analysis, systematization and generalization of the data obtained; filling in questionnaires; running surveys, conversations and observations; reflection methods and generalization of the research results.

The analysis of the Master's programs for training tutors implemented in various Russian universities shows that practically none of them address the organization of tutor support for long-term ill children. At the moment, these issues have become the subject of study mainly only in the system of continuing education, in particular at Moscow City Pedagogical University (MCPU).

Since 2015, Moscow City Pedagogical University has been implementing a continuing education retraining program for teachers and parents of children with long-term illnesses called “Individual support for students in the educational process of general education” (72 hours long) and an additional general developmental program for teachers and parents, without setting any educational prerequisites, to work with children undergoing long-term treatment in medical institutions named “Psychological support for children undergoing long-term treatment in medical institutions, in the process of their educating” (50 hours long). Interactive lectures, seminars, trainings and practical sessions were organized for teachers and parents.

In the 2015-2016 academic year, 196 people were trained at Moscow City Pedagogical University including 116 teachers and 80 parents of children undergoing long-term treatment in medical institutions.

Program training was and is being conducted using distance learning technologies, including the distance learning system MOODLE and the online educational portal <http://uchimznaem.ru/> (Teach & Know), where teaching materials were placed.

In 2017 teachers at Moscow City Pedagogical University developed a variable professional retraining program “Psychology and Pedagogy of Inclusive Education” for teachers and parents of children who are on long-term treatment in medical institutions. The program was implemented in a mixed format; during the two years of its implementation 128 people were trained, including 89 parents and 29 teachers.

In 2018-2019, the teachers at Moscow City Pedagogical University developed and tested an integrated program of formal and non-formal continuing education of parents on the following topic: “Tutoring for children with long-term illnesses”. The program aimed at the formation of professional competencies among its students, ensuring the application of a new type of professional activity in pedagogical support for the implementation of students’ individual educational routes and projects, including those children who are long and seriously ill. This program was carried out by university teachers together with their colleagues from a separate structural unit of school No. 109 in Moscow, volunteers, activists of charity foundations, non-profit organizations working with long-term ill children and their parents. The program taught the parents of children undergoing treatment at FNCC and RCCH. The total number of the participants equaled 137.

## **6. Findings**

This article presents the results of the study run by Moscow City Pedagogical University on the theme “Continuing education program development and testing for teachers and parents of children who are on long-term treatment in medical institutions”, which was carried out from 2015 to 2019 and is still continued.

Survey results show that 71% of teachers and 98% of parents experience professional deficiencies in studying the psychological characteristics of long-term and seriously ill children, the characteristics of their emotional - volitional, cognitive and communicative spheres; in organizing the educational process as well as in creating optimal conditions for teaching children who are on long-term medical treatment. All these issues should be discussed at various programs and trainings with teachers and parents of children with long-term illnesses.

The analysis of foreign and Russian practices of continuing education of teachers and parents of seriously and long-term ill children shows that currently mainly the system of non-formal education of teachers and parents is being developed to support long-term ill children. There is limited experience in the training and retraining for teachers of long-term ill children, despite the obvious relevance of long-term ill children and their parents' tutoring.

Professional retraining programs are developed on the basis of the analysis of those problems that teachers and parents experience when interacting with long-term ill children, identifying teachers' professional deficiencies and educational needs, as well as taking into account students' individual characteristics and abilities. Students can design their own educational routes since the programs are modular and variable. Each program contains invariant (basic) modules that all students are expected to master.

According to their needs and interests teachers and parents can choose not only modules, but also individual events (seminars, trainings, webinars, workshops, video conferences, meetings with interesting people, etc.), which the informal part of the program comprises.

Charity foundations, nonprofit organizations, and expert associations, whose goal is to provide comprehensive all-round assistance to long-term ill children and their parents, actively joined this work on non-formal education of teachers and parents. They organize and conduct seminars, consultations and workshops. Therefore, there is a need to integrate the efforts and resources of entities implementing programs of formal and non-formal continuing education of parents. As a result of this study, an integrated program of professional retraining of parents on the issues of tutor support for children with long-term illness was developed.

The program integrates on a systematic basis the best initiative practices in various aspects of working with sick children, which complement the training modules included in the basic and subject-specific blocks of the formal part of the program. Mastering the educational program by students will allow them to successfully fulfill the functions of tutors for children with long-term illnesses. The implementation of the program showed it is on demand among teachers and parents of children who are on long-term treatment in medical organizations.

Having successfully completed the program, parents are given a new qualification of a "tutor", which enables them to get engaged in professional activities providing tutorial support for long-term ill children. This will help parents solve two problems: provide them with the opportunity to find a job in a new professional sphere and provide qualified psychological and pedagogical assistance to their child and other children who find themselves in a difficult life situation.

## **7. Conclusion**

The study allows us to draw the following conclusion:

- at the present stage, it is important to update the problem of educating children who are on long-term treatment due to the fact that the number of seriously ill and long-term ill children, and, consequently, parents who need psychological and pedagogical assistance to accompany their child and other children who are in same life situation is growing;

- practice has shown that a program which integrates the possibilities and resources of formal and non-formal education has become more effective, since the training modules included in the basic and subject-specific blocks of the formal part of the program are supplemented by the best initiative practices in various aspects of working with long-term ill children. The interconnection of the modules of the formal and informal parts of the program ensures its integrity, scientific character and practical orientation;

- mastering the educational program by the students will allow the teacher and parents to successfully perform the functions of tutoring children with long-term illnesses, provide them with psychological and pedagogical support and accompany them in the hospital and upon returning home;

- it is necessary to continue research on identifying effective teaching practices for teachers and parents of children with long-term illnesses, summarizing experience in this area, defining professional needs and deficits, developing individual schemes for teachers' professional development, and also analyzing the employment of seriously and long-term ill children's parents who have been taught in these professional retraining programs to adjust and improve professional retraining programs.

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