



New DeveloPPP project addresses the need for ecological specialists in Central Asia

OPASCA and GIZ initiate a program to provide sustainably skilled health professionals in Uzbekistan in order to ensure the health care of cancer patients

Mannheim, April 22nd, 2020 After more than twelve months of preparation, in January OPASCA GmbH is starting a cooperation project with the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) GmbH to qualify, establish and further develop radiation therapy professions in Uzbekistan according to German standards.

DeveloPPP a BMZ program

As part of DeveloPPP, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supports sustainable business initiatives in developing and emerging countries with technical and financial resources. The private sector company involved always works together with one of the two public partners in the program: GIZ or DEG (Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft). The target group of the program are companies with development-relevant project ideas that go beyond investments in their core business. The project may last up to three years.

Cooperation project by OPASCA and GIZ

Along with some of its international partners, OPASCA is currently building an ecological clinic in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, which is scheduled to open in January 2022. However, since the health care in Uzbekistan for cancer patients is currently not as well developed as in Germany, the Uzbek educational system and the labour market do not have the professional groups necessary for the operation of such an oncological clinic. For this reason, the aim of the three-year DeveloPPP project, which began on the first of January 2020, is to ensure the long-term training and qualification of the necessary medical staff in Uzbekistan and throughout Central Asia. Together with experts from Mannheim University Medical Center (UMM), the first step will be to qualify a pilot group of medical physicists from Uzbekistan according to German standards, and thereafter develop a curriculum for this professional group. In the form of a train-the-trainer concept, the pilot group will then qualify further potential local experts on site. In addition to this, measures will be initiated in cooperation with the local educational institutions in order to establish the necessary educational structures in Uzbekistan on a sustainable basis. Both OPASCA and GIZ provide a pool of staff on the Uzbek and German sides to provide bilateral administrative, technical and organizational support for the implementation of the project.

Pilot project for the professional group of medical physicists

The DeveloPPP project is initially aimed at medical physicists. Due to the complex processes and the constant patient-specific parameterization of treatment devices in radio oncology, the technical experts and practical clinical experience of this professional group play a key role in ensuring the quality of treatment. After an application process, participants spend 6 to 8 weeks at UMM to learn about German standards in radiation therapy, and complete this phase with an examination. Part of the training in Germany is both theoretical content and practical assignments within the daily clinical routine. Afterwards, qualified medical physicists return to Uzbekistan, where they develop the Train-the-Trainer concept together with their Uzbek colleagues at the national cancer research center of the Uzbek Ministry of Health. The aim is to provide not only short-term but also long-term further training for medical staff in the field of medical physics. It is planned to further develop the curriculum for the professional groups of radio oncologists and medical technical radiology assistants (MTRAs).



Illustration of how the train-the-trainer concept works.

Health care in Uzbekistan

When compared internationally, local cancer patient care in Central Asia still has room for improvement. In Uzbekistan, there are only two linear accelerators (LINACs) available for the radiotherapeutic treatment of approximately 34 million people. On the other hand, in Germany there are about 600 LINACs for about 83 million people, and in addition to this, numerous qualified experts, training opportunities and therapy centers, as well as certified cancer centers. In cooperation with its subsidiary OPASCA German Oncology Solutions (GOS) GmbH, OPASCA has been addressing this issue since 2018 and provides targeted support for the development of the Central Asian healthcare system.

About OPASCA GmbH

OPASCA is a manufacturer of process-oriented assistance and workflow management systems for everyday hospital life, and specifically addresses the special requirements of daily routine in terms of (planning and patient) safety, as workflow management and real-time resource control of treatment processes. For this purpose, OPASCA uses both software and hardware components developed in-house, which, in addition to providing information from various sub/external systems, also includes newly acquired digital information from the interaction with OPASCA systems. In addition to clinical individual solutions, which provide the specialist staff with a real-time overview of various case-related and/or appointment-related information, OPASCA also offers solutions for the active involvement of patients in the therapy process. For example, via a terminal with which the patient can interact independently, make themselves aware of the status of the treatment, check-in and -out, and receive information about their planned appointments.

Over the course of time, OPASCA has opened up further areas of application in clinical health care due to continuous expansion of the product portfolio. Integrated total solutions adapted to individual requirements enable clinics and hospitals to increase and permanently secure their process efficiency and quality of patient care.

This allows doctors to concentrate on what is most important for their patients.

You can find further information at: www.opasca.com.

More information on the BMZ program can be found at www.developpp.de.

More information on the public project partner GIZ can be found at www.giz.de.

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