



e-ISSN 3041-2498

Public Management and Policy

<https://www.eu-scientists.com/index.php/pmap>


Public Management of the Postgraduate Medical Education System: International Experience and Strategic Priorities for Ukraine

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Research Article

DOI:

[10.70651/3041-2498/2026.1.02](https://doi.org/10.70651/3041-2498/2026.1.02)

Received:

24 November 2025

Accepted:

27 December 2025

Published online:

6 January 2026

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Postgraduate medical education is a key factor in maintaining and improving the quality and safety of medical services, as well as an important tool for developing the human resources of the health care system. In the context of ongoing healthcare reforms, digital transformation and European integration processes, Ukraine faces the need to modernize the mechanisms of public management in this area. The traditional system of postgraduate education, based on centralized forms of training and periodic advanced training, today requires a transition to the concept of continuous professional development, which provides for flexible, individualized and practice-oriented training throughout the professional life of medical workers. The article analyzes the current state of postgraduate medical education in Ukraine, identifies key problems, including fragmentation of management between authorities and educational institutions, low level of digitalization of processes, unequal access to quality education between regions and lack of systemic incentives for the participation of medical workers in professional development. In addition, a comparative analysis of international models of professional development of medical workers in the countries of the European Union, the USA, Canada and according to the recommendations of the World Health Organization, was carried out, demonstrating the effectiveness of mandatory training, integration of digital platforms, accreditation of training programs, independent monitoring and implementation of motivational mechanisms. Based on the results obtained, strategic guidelines aimed at increasing the efficiency, accessibility and transparency of the management of postgraduate medical education in Ukraine are proposed. Among them: the normative consolidation of the obligation of professional development, the creation of a unified digital register of educational trajectories, the development of regional centers and mobile educational platforms, the integration of professional development into the licensing and accreditation system, as well as the establishment of financial and career incentives for medical workers. The implementation of such measures will modernize the public administration system, ensure equal access to quality education, integrate the Ukrainian education system into the European and international context, and increase the professional competence of medical workers, which will contribute to improving the quality and safety of medical services in the country.



KEYWORDS

public administration, postgraduate medical education, continuous professional development, health care reform, strategic management, digital transformation.



Публічне управління системою післядипломної медичної освіти: міжнародний досвід та стратегічні пріоритети для України

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СТАТТЯ

АНОТАЦІЯ

Дослідницька

DOI:

[10.70651/3041-2498/2026.1.02](https://doi.org/10.70651/3041-2498/2026.1.02)

Отримана:

24.11.2025 р.

Прийнята:

27.12.2025 р.

Опублікована:

06.01.2026 р.

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Післядипломна медична освіта є ключовим чинником підтримання та підвищення якості та безпеки надання медичних послуг, а також важливим інструментом розвитку кадрового потенціалу системи охорони здоров'я. У контексті триваючих реформ охорони здоров'я, цифрової трансформації та євроінтеграційних процесів Україна стикається з необхідністю модернізації механізмів публічного управління цією сферою. Традиційна система післядипломної освіти, що базувалася на централізованих формах навчання та періодичному підвищенні кваліфікації, сьогодні потребує переходу до концепції безперервного професійного розвитку, яка передбачає гнучке, індивідуалізоване та практико-орієнтоване навчання протягом усього професійного життя медичних працівників. У статті проведено аналіз сучасного стану післядипломної медичної освіти в Україні, виявлено ключові проблеми, серед яких фрагментованість управління між органами влади та навчальними закладами, низький рівень цифровізації процесів, нерівний доступ до якісного навчання між регіонами та відсутність системних стимулів для участі медичних працівників у професійному розвитку. Додатково здійснено порівняльний аналіз міжнародних моделей професійного розвитку медичних працівників у країнах Європейського Союзу, США, Канаді та за рекомендаціями Всесвітньої організації охорони здоров'я, що демонструють ефективність обов'язковості навчання, інтеграції цифрових платформ, акредитації навчальних програм, незалежного моніторингу та впровадження мотиваційних механізмів. На основі отриманих результатів запропоновано стратегічні орієнтири, спрямовані на підвищення ефективності, доступності та прозорості управління післядипломною медичною освітою в Україні. Серед них: нормативне закріплення обов'язковості професійного розвитку, створення єдиного цифрового реєстру освітніх траєкторій, розвиток регіональних центрів та мобільних освітніх платформ, інтеграція професійного розвитку у систему ліцензування та акредитації, а також встановлення фінансових і кар'єрних стимулів для медичних працівників. Впровадження таких заходів дозволить модернізувати систему публічного управління, забезпечити рівний доступ до якісного навчання, інтегрувати українську систему освіти у європейський та міжнародний контекст і підвищити професійну компетентність медичних працівників, що сприятиме підвищенню якості та безпеки медичних послуг у країні.



КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

публічне управління, післядипломна медична освіта, безперервний професійний розвиток, реформування охорони здоров'я, стратегічне управління, цифрова трансформація.

1. Introduction

In the context of the transformation of the health care system of Ukraine, postgraduate medical education is becoming of key importance as a tool for ensuring the continuous professional development of medical workers [7]. The rapid updating of medical knowledge, the introduction of evidence-based medicine, the digitalization of clinical practice, and the growing requirements for the quality of services necessitate effective public management of this industry.

Public administration in the field of postgraduate education covers the formation of state policy, legal regulation, organization of the educational process, quality assurance, financing and monitoring of results. The peculiarities of medical education – its social significance, interdisciplinarity, and constant need to update competencies – require a strategic approach that combines centralized standards with the autonomy of educational institutions. Despite the presence of separate regulations [3; 8], the system of postgraduate medical education in Ukraine remains fragmented, with insufficiently defined powers and the absence of a unified development strategy. This fragmentation reduces the effectiveness of training specialists, complicates the introduction of innovations and inhibits integration into the European educational space.

Therefore, the study of strategic guidelines of public administration in the system of postgraduate medical education is relevant. It should take into account international experience, modern challenges and needs of the Ukrainian healthcare system.

2. Literature Review

Postgraduate medical education in Ukraine has a long history, originating from the Soviet model of advanced training. Traditionally, the system was centralized, focused on periodic training in academic institutions. The transition to a market economy and European integration processes necessitated a transition to the concept of continuous professional development (CPD) [13].

International experience of continuous professional development demonstrates the effectiveness of the following approaches: (1) EU. National authorities regulate CPD within the framework of the European Commission and the UEMS. A system of loans, accreditation of providers and electronic platforms (e-Portfolio) is used [4; 5]. (2) USA. Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) coordinates the CPD; mandatory certification support; a high level of competition between providers stimulates innovation; integration with MOC; funding from various sources [1]. (3) Canada. Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) applies Maintenance of Certification; a combination of formal and non-formal learning; MAINPORT online platform; Focus on results [10]. (4) World Health Organization (WHO). The recommendations include the institutionalization of CPD, integration with licensing systems, digitalization of access, and cross-sectoral cooperation [2; 12].

The Ukrainian system remains fragmented and insufficiently digitalized, with an unclear distribution of powers between authorities, educational institutions, and professional associations [3; 8; 9; 13].

3. Problem Statement

The article aims to determine strategic directions for modernizing the mechanisms of managing postgraduate medical education in Ukraine, taking into account modern challenges, international experience, and the needs of the health care system. Thus, the study aims to identify strategic guidelines to modernize the management system of postgraduate education, increase its efficiency, ensure equal access to high-quality CPD, and integrate the Ukrainian education system into the European and international educational space.

4. Methods and Materials

The study used a comprehensive approach, which included an analysis of Ukrainian regulations, in particular the Laws of Ukraine “On Education” and “On Higher Education”, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 302, the Order of the Ministry of Health No. 446 and the accreditation standards of the National Agency for Higher Education [3; 8; 9; 13]. A comparative analysis of international models of continuous professional development (CPD) in the EU, the USA, Canada and according to WHO recommendations was also carried out [1; 2; 4; 5; 10; 12]. In addition, a systematic

analysis of problems and management challenges was carried out, in particular, fragmentation of management, digital gaps, unequal access and low motivation of doctors. On the basis of this, a synthesis of strategic guidelines aimed at modernizing and increasing the efficiency of the Ukrainian system of postgraduate medical education is carried out.

5. Results and Discussion

The state of postgraduate medical education in Ukraine

Postgraduate medical education in Ukraine has a long history, originating from the Soviet model of advanced training. For decades, it functioned as a centralized system focused on periodic training in academic institutions. However, the transition to a market economy, healthcare reform, and European integration have created a need to update approaches to professional development [13].

The modern model is gradually transforming from formal training to the concept of continuous professional development, which provides for flexible, individualized and practice-oriented learning throughout professional life.

Regulation of postgraduate medical education is carried out mainly by acts of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Cabinet of Ministers. Key documents: Laws of Ukraine "On Education" and "On Higher Education". Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 302 (as amended) on the procedure for advanced training of doctors [3]. Order of the Ministry of Health No. 446 approving the Regulations on Postgraduate Education of Doctors [8]. Accreditation Standards for Educational Programs of the National Agency for Higher Education [9]. Despite this, the regulatory framework remains fragmented, with an unclear distribution of powers between authorities, educational institutions and professional associations.

The system includes: National institutions (Shupyk National Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education). Medical universities with postgraduate faculties. Simulation Training Centers. Professional associations that organize training and certification courses.

The lack of a single coordinating body for the formation of the strategic policy of the CPD leads to duplication of functions, unequal access and lack of systematic quality monitoring.

Key problems hindering development: Fragmentation of management between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Agency for Higher Education and educational institutions. Insufficient digitalization of training and accounting processes for CPD [6]. Lack of a unified development strategy that takes into account the needs of the regions and international standards. Limited funding and low motivation of doctors to study. Unequal access to quality education between the centers and the periphery.

Strategic Challenges and Management Challenges

The main challenge is the lack of a single focal point for policy-making, quality monitoring, and integration of educational processes. The dispersion of powers between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Agency for Higher Education, educational institutions and associations leads to duplication, regulatory uncertainty and inconsistency of actions, which complicates reforms, the introduction of uniform standards of CPD and ensuring equal access.

Although digital technologies are actively introduced into clinical practice, the system of postgraduate education remains predominantly "paper". The limited use of electronic platforms for registration, accounting, and certification of training is a major drawback. The lack of a unified digital register of CPD, integrated with the registers of the Ministry of Health and the National Health Service of Ukraine, complicates the management of doctors' educational trajectories, monitoring their qualifications and making informed personnel decisions [11].

There is a significant disparity between the capabilities of doctors in large cities and peripheral regions. Access to simulation centers, modern courses, and international certifications is concentrated mainly in regional centers, while doctors from rural areas have limited access to high-quality CPD, which poses risks to patient safety and deepens inequalities [12].

The system does not provide clear incentives for doctors to participate in CPD. Advanced training is often perceived as a formality, and not a tool for professional growth [13]. The lack of connection between training, career growth, and salary reduces the effectiveness of educational programs.

Most institutions depend on insufficient government funding, which hinders innovation, updating the base, and attracting qualified teachers. Limited managerial autonomy makes it difficult to plan strategically, partner with international organizations, and adapt to market needs.

International experience: Models of CPD in the EU, USA, Canada and WHO

Continuous professional development (CPD) is the main element of health policy in developed countries, aimed at constant updating of knowledge and competencies in accordance with modern standards [2; 12]. Successful models are based on the principles of mandatory program accreditation, independent monitoring, and association with a professional license.

In EU countries, CPD is regulated by national authorities, but within the framework of the common framework of the European Commission and the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) [4]. Main features: mandatory CPD for license renewal in most countries [5]; credit system (CME/CPD points); accreditation of providers through independent agencies; digital accounting platforms (e.g., e-Portfolio in the UK).

In the United States, CPD is coordinated by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education [1]. Features of the model: de facto mandatory to maintain certification; high competition between providers, which stimulates innovation; Integration with clinical information systems (Maintenance of Certification); funding from employers, insurers, and pharmaceutical companies (with strict control of conflicts of interest) [1].

The Canadian CPD system is coordinated by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and is based on the Maintenance of Certification concept [9]. Main Features: mandatory CPD for College Members; three types of activities (formal, informal learning and evaluation of practice results); MAINPORT online platform for development planning and accounting; focus on the result, not just the number of hours [10].

The World Health Organization sees CPD as a key component of human resources development for health [12]. Its recommendations include: institutionalization of CPD at the level of national policy; connection of CPD with licensing and accreditation systems; use of digital technologies to expand access in remote regions; intersectoral cooperation between governments, educational institutions and professional communities [2; 12].

Strategic guidelines for Ukraine

Taking into account health care reform and European integration, Ukraine needs a clearly defined national CPD strategy, aligned with WHO recommendations [2; 12]. The strategy should include: normative consolidation of the obligation of CPD; creation of a unified digital register of CPD; clear distribution of roles of the state, educational institutions and professional associations; integration of CPD with licensing and accreditation systems.

Digitalization of CPD should become a priority of public administration, taking into account the experience of the EU and North America [4; 10]. It is proposed: to develop a national CPD platform for registration, accounting, evaluation and certification; ensure its integration with the registers of the Ministry of Health, the National Health Service of Ukraine, and the National Agency for Higher Education and Higher Education; implement electronic portfolios of doctors to fix the educational trajectory; provide access to online courses, simulation trainings, and international programs.

For effective CPD management, it is necessary to provide postgraduate education institutions with greater financial and academic autonomy, allow partnerships with international organizations, and stimulate the development of innovative educational programs adapted to the needs of regions and specialties [13].

Public administration should ensure a direct link between CPD and professional development, as in advanced models [1; 5; 10]. Proposals: include achievements in the CPD as a criterion for certification, license renewal and appointment to managerial positions; introduce financial incentives (allowances, grants, compensation for the cost of education); create defined career trajectories related to educational activity.

The National Strategy should provide, according to the principles of WHO equity [2]: development of regional CPD centers; mobile educational platforms for rural areas; state funding of CPD for primary care doctors; and inclusiveness of programs for different categories of medical professionals.

6. Conclusions

Postgraduate medical education is a critical component of the health care system, which provides professional adaptation and improvement of the quality of medical services [7; 6]. In the context of reforms, digitalization and European integration, public management in this area should be strategically oriented, systemic and transparent.

In the course of the study, it was found that: the system of postgraduate medical education in Ukraine is fragmented, with unclear managerial powers [3; 8; 9]. There is an urgent need for the digital transformation of the CPD, the creation of a single register and electronic educational trajectories [6; 11]. International experience (EU, USA, Canada, WHO) demonstrates effective CPD models that combine mandatory, digitalization, accreditation and motivation [1; 4; 5; 12; 13]. For Ukraine, it is necessary to form a national strategy for CPD, expand the autonomy of institutions, ensure equal access to education, and integrate CPD into the licensing system [2; 13].

The proposed strategic guidelines can become the basis for modernizing management mechanisms, increasing the efficiency of postgraduate medical education and strengthening the human resources of the health care system of Ukraine.

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