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ISSUES OF ORGANIZING MEDICAL SERVICES IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN UZBEKISTAN IN THE 1950s–1970s

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Abstract. This article analyzes the issues of organizing medical services in preschool educational institutions in Uzbekistan during the 1950s–1970s. The study examines the state of the healthcare system in the post-war period, problems related to the provision of medical services in kindergartens and nurseries located in rural areas, shortages of medical personnel, and the level of compliance with sanitary and hygienic requirements.

Keywords: Preschool educational institutions, medical services, nursery, kindergarten, sanitation, hygiene, prevention, Soviet period, healthcare.

Today, the development of the preschool education system in the Republic of Uzbekistan is recognized as one of the most important priorities of state policy. As emphasized in the speeches of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev, “a new spirit and new methodologies must be introduced into kindergartens, and the professional capacity of educators should correspondingly increase” [6]. Therefore, in recent years, particular attention has been paid to expanding the network of preschool educational institutions, strengthening their material and technical base, providing them with qualified pedagogical and medical personnel, and ensuring the protection of children’s health.

In this context, studying the process of organizing medical services in preschool educational institutions in Uzbekistan during the 1950s–1970s, as well as identifying existing problems and ways of addressing them, is of significant scientific and practical importance today. The achievements and shortcomings revealed through historical experience serve as an important source for ensuring children’s health, improving the quality of medical services, and strengthening a systematic approach in the modern preschool education system.

From this perspective, the article analyzes the organization and development of medical services in preschool educational institutions in Uzbekistan during the post-war period based on historical sources and draws scientific conclusions in close connection with contemporary reforms.

In the 1950s–1960s, the provision of medical services in kindergartens in Uzbekistan improved in connection with post-war recovery and development processes. However, during the early post-war years, very limited financial resources were allocated to the development of healthcare in Uzbekistan. According to statistical data, the situation began to improve noticeably only in the 1950s.





During this period, serious problems were observed in the provision of medical services in permanent collective farm kindergartens located in rural areas of Uzbekistan [1, p. 67]. Although medical personnel were formally assigned to these institutions, in practice they often failed to fulfill their duties or did not operate at all [3, p. 6]. District healthcare departments and rural medical stations did not properly supervise collective farm kindergartens. Children were admitted to kindergartens and nurseries without undergoing initial medical examinations, which significantly limited disease prevention efforts.

Due to the shortage of personnel, doctors assigned to rural kindergartens visited infrequently or did not visit at all. There was also an insufficient number of nurses with secondary specialized medical education. As a result, various infectious diseases became widespread among children [1, p. 67]. Because of the weak provision of medical services, diseases such as scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough, dysentery, dispensary-related illnesses, and focal pneumonia were widely observed in kindergartens and nurseries.

On November 16, 1950, the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR issued Resolution No. 2014 “On Improving the Activities of Kindergartens.” To ensure the implementation of this resolution, comprehensive measures were undertaken to improve childcare, nutrition, and health monitoring in nurseries and kindergartens. Subsequently, institutions that failed to meet sanitary requirements were closed, and supervision over seasonal nurseries was strengthened. After the adoption of the resolution, efforts to establish nurseries and kindergartens that complied with sanitary standards intensified, including the construction of new buildings, which led to an increase in their number across the republic. The activities of these institutions and the health status of children were placed under full medical supervision, and vaccination efforts against diseases were improved [4, p. 26].

In the spring of 1958, 72 nurseries with a capacity of 1,600 children were established in state farms of the republic by the healthcare system. However, nurses were often required to serve several nurseries (two or three) located far apart from each other. This situation reduced the effectiveness of medical assistance and created difficulties in providing timely and high-quality medical services to children [3, p. 6].

On October 21, 1961, the methodological letter “On Organizing Medical Services for Children in Nursery-Kindergartens,” approved by the Ministry of Health of the RSFSR, was implemented across all republics of the Soviet Union, including Uzbekistan [5, p. 68]. In particular, it clarified procedures for admitting children to nursery-kindergartens and dividing them into age groups (for example, “nursery-age groups” and “preschool-age groups”). The methodological letter also defined coordinated and effective working methods among staff regarding daily routines, safe nutrition, health improvement activities, play organization, educational sessions, and the establishment of sanitary and hygienic conditions.

Although precise data on the state of medical services in kindergartens during the 1960s–1970s are limited, this period was marked by a significant expansion of





preschool educational institutions in Uzbekistan. From 1965 onward, the expansion of benefits provided to women with young children led to a sharp decrease in the number of children under one year of age admitted to preschool institutions. Consequently, the workload of pediatricians and specialized medical professionals (such as ophthalmologists and otolaryngologists) decreased significantly [2, p. 64]. At the same time, specialized preventive and medical measures for this age group were not sufficiently developed in polyclinics. As a result, although doctors' functional responsibilities were reduced, staffing units and normative indicators remained unchanged.

One of the most important stages in improving the organization of medical services in preschool institutions in the Uzbek SSR was the adoption of the decision of the Ministry of Health on July 31, 1969, No. 02-1/132, "On the Position of Medical Doctor in Preschool Educational Institutions" [2, p. 64]. This decision aimed to improve the effectiveness of medical and preventive services in kindergartens, prevent diseases, and optimize the healthcare system, updating the earlier Order No. 695 of the USSR Ministry of Health dated September 20, 1949, in accordance with contemporary requirements.

Despite these limitations, the adoption of methodological guidelines and the establishment of medical positions in preschool institutions laid the foundation for systematic medical and preventive care. The historical experience of this period highlights the importance of effective coordination between healthcare and preschool education systems and offers valuable lessons for improving child health protection in contemporary preschool institutions.

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