Master in
Health Services Management

International Centre for Health Management (ICHM)
Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome

In collaboration with

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Italy)
Directorate General for Development Co-operation

and

Italian and European Universities
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<td>DGCS</td>
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<td>ISS</td>
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<td>MHSM</td>
<td>Master of Health Services Management</td>
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<td>PHC</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) was founded in 1934, and became the technical and scientific body of the Italian National Health Service in 1978. Its role within the Italian health system is to promote public health through scientific research, surveys, controls and analytical tests in the different fields of health sciences: infectious diseases; non-infectious diseases; environment; food, drugs; assessment and planning of health services.

The Institute promotes technical and scientific updating and training of Italian public health operators through training activities, workshops, conferences and seminars. It collaborates with the Minister of Health in drawing up and implementing public health programmes and proposes technical regulations in the field of public health. The present structure of the Institute has been determined by the need to extend and deepen its research activity on the basis of recent scientific discoveries and modern trends.

The Institute, today, is a large complex of interrelating scientific laboratories and technical services, in which each public health research sector is managed by a large number of qualified researchers and technicians. The Institute's research and control activities are the direct expression of its aims pursued as the leading scientific institution of the Italian National Health Service.

In 1987, the ISS, together with the Directorate General for Development Co-operation (DGCS) of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO), established the International Centre for Health Management (ICHM). In 1989, ICHM was recognised as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Training and Research in District Health Systems. Because of its accumulated experience in the areas of adult and active training methods, in 1997 ICHM
became WHO Collaborating Centre for Problem-Based Learning in Health Professions Education.

ICHM INSTITUTIONAL AIMS

• Training Italian and foreign health personnel in public health and management.
• Providing methodological support and technical advise to organisations and institutions involved in training of health personnel and health co-operation abroad.
• Providing technical consultancies to DGCS, bilateral and multilateral co-operation agencies in fields such as programme planning and evaluation, training, primary environmental care, nutrition, development of educational material on health and community participation.
• Conducting research in operational issues related to PHC and health systems development.
• Organising and sponsoring international and national research meetings.
• Writing, editing, publishing and disseminating original training and scientific articles and texts on primary health care, health co-operation and development.
• Promoting Problem-Based Learning in health professions training.

Since 1988 the Centre has offered a Master Course on Health Management at District level for Developing Countries. In 1997, the course has become the Master of Health Services Management (MHSM).

THE RELEVANCE OF A TRAINING PROGRAMME IN HEALTH SERVICES MANAGEMENT

Primary Health Care as a strategy for achieving health for all has been adopted by virtually all countries participating in the World Health Organisation (WHO). The implementation of this strategy, which began in the late seventies, has been pursued with varying degrees of commitment and has obtained different results in different countries. Still, the national health systems of a great majority of countries have been sensitised towards a more
promotive-focused, intersectoral-oriented, technologically appropriate and community-based approach. Although the PHC strategy requires the co-ordinated contributions of all levels of the health and health-related systems, many of the key-tasks of putting policy into action fall upon health professionals working at health services delivery level. It is at this level, where links are made between governments and communities, that the main obstacles to PHC implementation were identified during the Harare Conference on strengthening District Health Systems based on Primary Health Care, in 1987. Similarly, the Riga Conference in 1988 and Ljubiana Charter of 1996 reaffirmed that District Health Systems based on primary health care should be at the centre of the Health for all efforts.

The need for professional figures able to manage health services-from assessing the specific needs of communities to supervising health personnel in a supportive way and from motivating community participation to allocating health resources effectively - is widespread. The knowledge, skills and characteristics required by a health manager have been identified by the ICHM staff by examining - within the framework of PHC - the job descriptions and duties of health managers in developed and developing countries. Moreover, since the Alma Ata Declaration, a vast experience has been gained in the implementation of primary health care. The need for quality service while containing the costs of health care delivery urged governments and international organisations to introduce health reforms.

In the light of the above, ICHM aims at training health professionals who are competent in health services management, have managerial skills and can identify problems and motivate group resources to solve them. In addition, these individuals should be self-directed in their style of learning and capable of mobilising their learning skills throughout their future careers as cadres of national health systems.

OBJECTIVES OF MHSM PROGRAMME
The MHSM programme will emphasise the acquisition of knowledge and skills needed for managing health services. At the end of the training, graduates will be able to:

- Discuss the main features of health services management and health policies and reforms.
- Plan, manage and evaluate health programmes in accordance with national health plans and strategies and considering local priorities, resources and constraints.
- Plan and manage human and financial resources for health.
- Make effective oral and written communication.
- Design and implement operational research activities.
- Make use of health informatics that are relevant to health managers, specifically in the area of bio-statistics.

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE OF THE MHSM PROGRAMME

The MHSM programme consists of eleven core modules and a Final Thesis. The duration of the full-time Master’s Programme is 12 months, divided in a period of distance education (four months - by means of remote connection or guided reading of supplied didactic material) and a residential period based in Rome.

The modules and their main aims are summarised below:

Module 1
Informatics
Informatics has become an important tool for health managers at every level of health care system. This module will provide participants with the skills needed to use basic software such as word-processors, spreadsheets, presentation software, statistical programme and internet surfing. This module starts at the beginning of the course and each topic will be introduced as its use is deemed necessary.

Module 2
Policy and organisation of health services
This module gives an overview of health care provision patterns in developed and developing countries, discussing the experiences gained by different countries in implementing the primary health care approach. The module also introduces an overview of national health systems and of ongoing health reforms worldwide. This module starts with an assignment to be completed before starting the residential part of the course: participants are requested to assess their national/local health system and come with all relevant information for completing the Module.

**Module 3**

**Situation analysis**

This module will enable participants to carry out an analysis of the situation in which they operate as managers, setting out the basis for making decisions. Topics will include: type and possible sources of information, methods of data collection, analysis and presentation. Throughout the module participants will learn how to use Epi-Info software for entering, processing and analysing epidemiological data. At the end of the module participants will produce a situation analysis report.

**Module 4**

**Planning and management health services**

After learning the differences between strategic and operational planning, participants will have an overview of the "Project cycle" approach and its steps: situation analysis; problem identification; priority setting; planning, managing, monitoring, assessing and evaluating activities. Participants will focus on tools and skills for carrying out a situation analysis and developing an action plan. At the end of the module, each participant will develop a health project proposal according to a given project framework.

**Module 5**

**Management of health information systems**

This module will focus on the key areas of health information systems design and management. It integrates fundamental management concepts and the utilisation of information technology in health care. Topics will include: Health Information Systems (HIS) architecture, process, resources requirements, minimum data set to be collected, reporting and feedback systems,
critical factors for a successful implementation of the system. At the end of the module participants will be able to discuss the need for and uses of HIS as a tool for planning and decision-making at district and hospital levels.

**Module 6**  
**Communication skills**  
Besides the managerial and research skills, a health manager needs to acquire communication skills. After focusing on theoretical concepts and models about the nature of internal and external communication and social marketing participants will acquire tools and skills in analysing, preparing and presenting papers, reports and plans. This module entails continuous monitoring of participants' progress from the start to the end of the course.

**Module 7**  
**Management of human resources**  
Health personnel represents the most important resource in the health sector. Thus, its proper management is essential for the provision of quality care. Emphasis will be given to leadership and managerial styles needed for successful human resources management. This module provides participants with knowledge and skills for managing, training and motivating health workers.

**Module 8**  
**Management of financial resources**  
This module offers an economical vision of the health care delivery system in order to allow participants to use economical and financial tools and methods when taking decisions. The module mainly focuses on: economical aspects of health care services; selection and implementation of financing options; different models for organising health services delivery and, lastly, new approaches to the "Equity" concept.

**Module 9**  
**Evaluation of health services**  
Participants will gain knowledge and skills on different methods of evaluation and its central role in health care delivery. They will learn how to evaluate health services and at the end of the
module, each participant will prepare an evaluation scheme for a given set of services

**Module 10**

**Health technology assessment**

The module aims at gaining an embracing vision of the role of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) in the decision-making process by describing the steps, concepts and analytical tools used by HTA. It will focuses on the assessment of the cost-effectiveness of health care programmes and interventions. Participants will critically review the literature, understand the importance of economics, ethics and legal aspects in the adoption of specific technologies.

**Module 11**

**Health services research methodology**

During this module, participants will learn quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques utilised in health services research in order to support the decision making process and to solve problems arising in health services management. At the end of the module they will define a research study protocol.

**Final Thesis**

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**THE TEACHING-LEARNING METHOD**

The teaching-learning method adopted by ICHM finds its main and distinctive pillar in the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach. PBL was selected from the very beginning as appropriate to the continuing education and problem solving needs of the health service manager.

Moreover, there are visiting staff from renowned national and international universities and Institutions, all the departments of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità may give seminars, stimulate discussions and introduce new perspectives and debates.
ADMISSION CRITERIA

The following criteria are used for the selection of participants:
• educational qualification: a degree in Public Health, Medicine, or other relevant fields (nursing, social sciences, biology, ecology, health and sanitary architecture, veterinary medicine, economics, etc.);
• previous working experience preferably in managerial functions and in programmes assisted by the Italian cooperation;
• language: excellent knowledge of written and spoken English.

TUITION FEES

MHSM tuition fees are covered directly by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for foreign students who are awarded scholarships or may enquire directly with the ICHM Secretariat. Participants from developing countries are advised to contact the Italian Diplomatic Missions for information regarding scholarships. Participants can also apply for scholarships to other potential donors. However, evidence of scholarship, or of self-financing capability will be requested before final admission is granted. According to ISS regulations, all participants are required to hold a life and permanent disability insurance for the duration of the course.

ICHM RESOURCES

MHSM staff consists of an international multi-disciplinary team. It includes professionals in tropical medicine, public health, epidemiology, health economics, medical anthropology, health education, manpower development and training, information and documentation.

ICHM facilities (Aula Missiroli) are located within the Istituto Superiore di Sanità. Thus, participants to the MHSM will enjoy ISS services and commodities such as: a large library with both
English and Italian publications and an "on-line" database with national and international data banks, increasing the opportunities for wider bibliographic researches; a bank; a small supermarket and a bar/canteen.

A computer local area network has been installed for the use of both participants and resident staff. Participants have access to internet and electronic mail.
FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information regarding the MHSM Programme, please contact:

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Fax: 39-6-49387295
E-mail: g.de.vir@iss.it

For information regarding training opportunities in the *Istituto Superiore di Sanità*, please contact:

Director of Cultural Services
Istituto Superiore di Sanità
Viale Regina Elena 299
00161 Rome - Italy

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