



KEY ASPECTS OF THE ROLE OF FAMILY MEDICINE IN UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Family medicine is the foundation of primary health care in Uzbekistan, providing accessible, comprehensive, and continuous care to the population. Reforms aim to enhance the role of family doctors in disease prevention, clinical examinations, and treatment coordination, thereby reducing the burden on hospitals and improving quality of life. This review article analyzes the role of family medicine in the healthcare system of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the context of ongoing primary care reforms. It examines the principles and functions of family medicine, its current development, and key organizational, personnel, and resource constraints. Particular attention is paid to the preventive and coordinating role of family physicians in the early detection of diseases, clinical observation, and patient referral. Promising areas for the development of family medicine are substantiated, including strengthening preventive measures, improving management mechanisms, and integrating digital tools.

ОСНОВНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ РОЛИ СЕМЕЙНОЙ МЕДИЦИНЫ В УЗБЕКИСТАНЕ

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ABSTRACT

Семейная медицина является фундаментом первичной медико-санитарной помощи в Узбекистане, обеспечивая доступную, комплексную и непрерывную помощь населению. Реформы направлены на повышение роли семейных врачей в профилактике заболеваний, диспансеризации и координации лечения, что снижает нагрузку на стационары и повышает качество жизни. В обзорной статье проанализирована роль семейной



KEYWORDS

Аспекты, семейная медицина, первичная медико-санитарная помощь, профилактика, семейный врач, Республика Узбекистан.

медицины в системе здравоохранения Республики Узбекистан в условиях проводимых реформ первичного звена. Рассмотрены принципы и функции семейной медицины, современное состояние её развития, а также ключевые организационные, кадровые и ресурсные ограничения. Особое внимание уделено профилактической и координационной роли семейного врача в раннем выявлении заболеваний, диспансерном наблюдении и маршрутизации пациентов.

Introduction. Promising areas for the development of family medicine are substantiated, including strengthening preventive measures, improving management mechanisms, and integrating digital tools. It is shown that strengthening the institution of family medicine is a prerequisite for improving the efficiency and sustainability of the healthcare system in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Family medicine is a key component of primary health care and is considered a system-forming link in modern healthcare models, ensuring the accessibility, continuity, and preventive focus of medical care.

According to Schmalstieg-Bahr et al. (2021), general medical practice plays a central role in coordinating medical care in the context of an increasingly complex healthcare system and an increase in chronic diseases [17]. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the development of family medicine is taking place within the context of healthcare system reforms aimed at improving management efficiency, strengthening primary care, and optimizing resource use. Asadov and Khakimov (2022) and Nazarmatov (2024) emphasize that the transformation of primary health care is considered one of the priority areas of national healthcare policy [2,4,10]. In this context, family medicine acquires particular importance as a tool for implementing preventive and population-oriented approaches. The relevance of further analysis of the role of family medicine is determined by the expansion of its functions, the increasing workload of family physicians, and the need to adapt international principles of general medical practice to national organizational and personnel conditions [1,3].

The aim of this review article is to analyze the role of family medicine in the healthcare system of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the context of current reforms.

Family medicine in the structure of primary health care. Family medicine is a basic model for organizing primary health care, ensuring continuous, comprehensive, and preventive-oriented patient care. In modern healthcare systems, general practice is viewed as the central link that ensures the coordination of medical care and the integration of various levels of healthcare (Schmalstieg-Bahr et al., 2021) [17]. The key principles of family medicine are accessibility of medical care, its continuity, an integrated approach, and the priority of prevention. Family physicians act as the first contact specialist in the healthcare system and ensure early detection of diseases, dynamic



monitoring, and the development of patient adherence to treatment, which is emphasized in the works of Andreeva and Rezvoy (2021) [1].

The functions of family medicine include prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation, as well as the coordination of patient routing. According to Jamalieva et al. (2023), the professional competencies of a family physician encompass not only clinical skills but also organizational and managerial functions that determine the effectiveness of primary healthcare [7]. In the context of reforming the healthcare system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, family medicine is considered as a system-forming foundation of primary care. Asadov and Khakimov (2022) point out that the development of general medical practice is aimed at increasing the efficiency of primary health care and rationalizing resource use, with the family physician playing a key role in coordinating medical care [2]. Family medicine occupies a central place in the structure of primary health care, and the family physician acts as a system-forming element, ensuring the integration of preventive, therapeutic, and coordinating functions of healthcare.

The current state and key challenges in the development of family medicine in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The development of family medicine in the Republic of Uzbekistan is being implemented within the framework of primary health care reform and is accompanied by an expansion of the functional role of the family physician. Asadov and Khakimov (2022) note that the current organizational model is aimed at increasing the accessibility of primary care and reducing the burden on specialized levels of healthcare [2]. However, the expansion of family medicine functions is occurring with limited resources and personnel, which creates a structural imbalance in the system.

The key problem remains the staffing shortage and uneven distribution of family physicians, especially between urban and rural areas. Nazarmatov (2024) points out that staffing limitations directly reduce the quality and sustainability of primary health care [10]. An additional factor is the high professional workload caused by the combination of clinical, preventive, and administrative functions, which negatively impacts the quality of individual patient care [3,13]. Resource constraints exacerbate these problems. Insufficient material and technical resources and limited access to diagnostic capabilities reduce the potential for preventive and coordinative activities of family physicians. According to Sargsyan and Kukina (2021), the identified weaknesses in the organizational and staffing of family medicine clinics have a direct impact on their operational effectiveness [12]. The main systemic problems in the development of family medicine and their consequences for the activities of family physicians are presented.

Systemic Problems in the Development of Family Medicine and Their Consequences

Problem Block	Systemic Manifestation	Key Consequence
Organizational Model	Mismatch between Functions	Resources Limited Preventive Role
Staffing Shortages	Uneven Staffing Increased	Physician Workload
Resource Base	Limited Diagnostic	Capabilities Decreased
Professional Workload Combining	Clinical and Administrative Functions	Reduced Coordination Effectiveness



The current state of family medicine in the Republic of Uzbekistan is characterized by the expansion of the functional role of family physicians amid persistent personnel, resource, and organizational constraints, necessitating a rethinking of the mechanisms for prevention and coordination of medical care at the primary care level.

The role of family medicine in prevention and coordination of medical care. Family medicine is a key tool for implementing preventive healthcare at the primary care level. Early detection of diseases and risk factors is achieved through regular contact with the population and helps reduce the likelihood of late diagnosis of chronic and socially significant diseases, as emphasized in the works of Andreeva and Rezvoy (2021) [1,16]. An important element of preventive activities is dispensary observation, ensuring continuous monitoring of patients' health and correction of risk factors. Ibragimov et al. (2025) demonstrated that the participation of family physicians in the long-term monitoring of patients with chronic pathologies increases the effectiveness of preventive measures and treatment adherence [8,11].

The coordination function of family medicine is realized through patient routing and the rational distribution of medical care flows. Family physicians ensure informed referrals of patients to specialized levels and subsequent continuity of care, which reduces unnecessary burdens on specialized services and improves the efficient use of healthcare resources [2, 17]. An additional factor in increasing the effectiveness of preventive care is the interaction between the family physician and the patient's family, which facilitates the maintenance of long-term preventive and rehabilitative measures [14, 15]. The preventive and coordination activities of family medicine form the basis for the effective functioning of primary health care and determine its contribution to the sustainability of the healthcare system.

Prospects for the Development of Family Medicine. The prospective development of family medicine in the Republic of Uzbekistan is associated with the institutional strengthening of its preventive function within the structure of primary health care. Reorienting the activities of family physicians toward the systematic identification of risk factors and the prevention of chronic diseases is considered a key mechanism for improving the effectiveness of primary healthcare [1, 8]. An important area is improving family medicine management, including optimizing organizational models and rationally distributing functional workload. Asadov and Khakimov (2022) and Nazarmatov (2024) emphasize that improving the effectiveness of primary care requires a clear distinction between the clinical and administrative functions of family physicians, as well as the development of staff management competencies [2, 9, 10].

Significant development potential lies in the integration of digital tools into family medicine practice. The use of electronic medical systems, analytical platforms, and telemedicine solutions contributes to improved patient monitoring, a reduction in unnecessary workload, and data-driven management decisions. According to Dergacheva (2022), digitalization of primary healthcare creates the preconditions for a transition to more sustainable and patient-oriented models of family medicine [5, 6]. Similar approaches are reflected in international studies of general medical practice [17].



Conclusion. Family medicine is a system-forming element of the healthcare system in the Republic of Uzbekistan and a key element of primary health care. Its effectiveness is determined by the implementation of preventive functions, the coordination of medical care, and managerial support for family physicians. Strengthening these areas is key to improving the effectiveness of healthcare reforms. The development prospects for family medicine are determined by a stronger focus on preventive care, managerial rationalization, and the introduction of digital tools, making it a strategic foundation for modernizing the healthcare system in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

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