



National Center For Professional
Education Quality Assurance
Foundation

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

ANQA-2024/101

DECREE N 101

March 26, 2024

**ON ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF
GYUMRI STATE MEDICAL COLLEGE**

General Information about the Institution

Full name of the Institution: Gyumri State Medical College SNCO
Official Address: 3 Shirazi St., Gyumri, Shirak province, RA
Previous Accreditation **Not available**
decision and date:

Guided by the Statute on the State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs approved by the RA Government Decree N 978-N as of June 30, 2011, the RA Government Decree N 959-N as of June 30, 2011 on the Approval of Accreditation Criteria for Tertiary Education of RA, the Procedure on the Formation and Operation of the Accreditation Committee of the “National Center for Professional Education Quality Assurance” foundation (hereinafter referred to as “ANQA”) as well as by the Regulation on the Formation of ANQA’s Expert Panel, ANQA’s Accreditation Committee (hereinafter referred to as the “Committee”) discussed the issue on accreditation of institutional capacities of the Gyumri State Medical College (hereinafter referred to as “GSMC”, “TLI”) in the session of the Accreditation Committee held on February 15, 2024.

The main phases of the accreditation process were carried out within the following periods:

Submission of application: January 13, 2023
Submission of the revised self-evaluation: June 6, 2023
Site visit by the expert panel: September 25–28, 2023
Submission of the expert panel report: December 1, 2023

The external review of the GSMC's institutional capacities was carried out by an independent expert panel formed in compliance with the requirements set by the Regulation on the Formation of the Expert Panel. The evaluation was carried out according to the 10 criteria of institutional accreditation approved by the RA Government Decree N 959 as of June 30, 2011.

Among 10 criteria of the institutional accreditation, “**Infrastructure and Resources**” and “**Internal Quality Assurance**” were evaluated as unsatisfactory.

Having examined the GSMC's self-evaluation of institutional capacities, the expert panel report, the follow-up plan; having heard the conclusions on the expert panel evaluation, which were made by the three members selected by the Chair of the Accreditation Committee and were formed as a result of the meetings with the expert panel members and the GSMC's representatives; as well the comments and suggestions made by the Accreditation Committee members, the Committee stated the following:

1. The GSMC generally ensures the credible award of qualifications.

The GSMC's academic programmes (APs) meet the regional labour market's needs, aligning with its mission, state academic standards and the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF). The APs are implemented through a modular system, but the outcomes are not always measurable. The TLI has prepared a Methodological Guide that outlines the distinction between teaching and assessment methods, while presenting approaches to their integrated use. The teachers apply effective and student-centered teaching methods to promote team-based, problem-solving and outcome-based learning. The GSMC also places great emphasis on the development of practical skills and competencies. Most practical classes, some lectures and all internships are carried out at employers' premises.

The TLI has a teaching, administrative and supporting staff with the necessary professional qualifications for the implementation of educational processes. The GSMC has a policy for the selection of the teaching staff. Employers themselves often recommend new teachers. Their qualifications align with the courses they teach. Most of the teachers are doctors.

A collaborative educational environment has been established between the TLI and employers. A platform for exchange of practice and dissemination of best practices among teachers has been

created. The GSMC has adopted a policy for gradual rejuvenation of the teaching staff. Mechanisms are in place to engage novice teachers in the educational processes.

The technical condition of the GSMC building is assessed as inadequate. There is an urgent need to enhance the building's seismic resilience and carry out construction work. The TLI's classrooms and laboratories lack modern furnishings, equipment, and up-to-date medical supplies. The GSMC follows a policy for the joint use of resources with regional partner medical organisations, which allows practical classes to be conducted at the employers' modern and well-equipped laboratories.

2. Governance and quality assurance systems are at the stage of formation. However, there are development trends and the governance is aimed quality enhancement.

The GSMC's mission reflects its main goals and is well-defined, aimed at meeting the requirements of the labour market and preparing alumni to provide high-quality primary healthcare to the population.

The goals and objectives defined in the Strategic Plan (SP) reflect the stakeholder needs.

The SP's activities are included in the divisions' work plans. Their outcomes are partially summarised in relevant annual reports. Not all areas for enhancement identified in the reports have been incorporated into next year's work plans. The KPIs have not been defined.

In a short period of time, the GSMC has developed and implemented a regulatory framework for governance processes, clearly outlining job functions through the position passports and work regulations. The responsibilities of the councils and divisions are well-defined, contributing to effective governance processes.

Since 2022, the GSMC has started evaluation and, in some cases, enhancement stages, progressing toward completing the PDCA cycle.

The TLI has performed a cost-effectiveness analysis and is taking steps to increase financial resources.

In 2018, the GSMC's quality assurance processes have been launched. A quality assurance working group has been established, comprising teachers, administrative staff, and students. Since September 2020, the TLI has appointed a manager for education quality assurance.

The GSMC's quality assurance system is still at the stage of formation. The mechanisms for the dissemination of the QA culture are not effectively implemented. The internal stakeholders do not fully understand their role in quality assurance processes. The surveys do not include qualitative analysis summaries. However, the TLI has a clear understanding of this gap.

3. Internationalisation and research activities have development trends and support the credible award of qualifications.

The GSMC has clear mechanisms for the admission, selection and recruitment of students. The number of applicants in the academic year 2023-2024 has risen by about 6.5% in almost all professions compared to the 2021-2022 academic year.

There are policies and mechanisms for the identification of student needs. The current Student Council has some involvement in the identification process. The students have access to extracurricular opportunities and counseling services. Student assignments contain a research component that develops professional skills and creative thinking. The TLI has designed an assessment rubric that also facilitates student self-assessment. The students create their own portfolios for all courses, which include learning materials and practical assignments they have completed. There are students' career support services.

A research strategy has not been developed. The TLI has developed a Policy and Procedure for the Link between Research and Educational Activities, which emphasises student involvement in research, educational, methodological and organisational activities. The students get the opportunity to study and analyse real cases at employers' premises and laboratories. Joint classes are held with employer teachers, leading to the formation of applied and research skills.

The GSMC has five teachers holding academic degrees, with 19 scientific publications.

The procedure for stakeholder accountability defines the purpose and methods of ensuring accountability. The TLI has defined its internal and external stakeholders. The reports contain mainly quantitative analyses, with qualitative analyses not summarised and areas for enhancement

not highlighted. The Feedback mechanisms are partially available through Facebook and Instagram pages, while the website is being upgraded. Parent meetings and discussions with employers are organised. The students have some volunteering experience.

In 2023, the GSMC developed a Policy for External Relations and International Cooperation. The TLI has signed various contracts and agreements with Armenian and foreign organisations to establish cooperation for students, administrative staff, and teachers. The GSMC has developed a stable collaborative environment with leading medical institutions and organisations in the region to organise practical classes and internships at their facilities. Over the past two years, the number of the facilities has increased across all professions.

To expand its financial resources, the TLI applied for and won the Erasmus+ programme.

Upon the TLI's recommendation, teachers participate in Gyumri American Corner's regular free English courses to improve their English language skills.

4. There are shortcomings that do not have crucial impact in terms of the credible award of qualifications. Grounds are laid for enhancement.

5. The follow-up plan in the expert panel report is realistic and its implementation will lead to qualitative enhancements.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, as a result of an open voting, the Accreditation Committee:

DECIDED

1. **To award institutional accreditation to the Gyumri State Medical College SNCO for 4 /four/ years.**
2. After the publication of the decision on accreditation award, to submit a revised follow-up plan based on the expert panel report and respective time schedule to ANQA within two months, taking into account the need to give urgent solution to the problems existing in the fields of **“Infrastructure and Resources”** and **“Internal Quality Assurance”**.
3. To pay special attention to:

- a) the introduction of schedules and KPIs for the implementation of the Strategic Plan;
 - b) the need for clear and measurable KPIs to evaluate the effectiveness of the processes;
 - c) the improvement of the evaluation and enhancement stages;
 - d) the introduction of mechanisms for evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness of the APs, as well as for conducting benchmarking;
 - e) the delivery of professional and pedagogical training for the teaching staff, ensuring its regularity;
 - f) the enhancement of the teachers' and students' English and other foreign language proficiency;
 - g) the clarification of research directions and their integration into long and short-term plans.
4. In accordance with the requirements set by point 12 of the Statute on the State Accreditation of RA Education Institutions and their Academic Programs, every 2 /two/ years to submit a written report to the ANQA on the results of carried out activities by ensuring the evaluation of enhancement of the TLI's activity, innovations and achievements.
5. To assign the ANQA to carry out mandatory monitoring of effectiveness of the TLI's activities in accordance with the KPIs.

Chair of the Accreditation Committee:

A. Saghyan

March 26, 2024

Yerevan