

# World Bank approves \$125m loan for Belarus' healthcare system



MINSK, 21 November (BelTA) - The Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank has approved a \$125 million loan to the Republic of Belarus for a new Health System Modernization Project aimed to improve selected aspects of the quality of healthcare delivery in the country, BelTA learned from the World Bank Office in Belarus.

The project will assist Belarus in its efforts to deliver better neonatal care, establish e-Health system and ICT-based clinical decision-support tools. It will also contribute to strengthening clinical competencies of healthcare providers in the management of non-communicable diseases.

According to the World Bank, Belarus has made considerable improvements in the delivery of health services, particularly on universal access to healthcare and management of communicable diseases. There is scope for further improvement in the efficiency and quality of healthcare delivery.

“This project will enable the nationwide rollout of e-Health system to facilitate diagnosis of illnesses, clinical decisions for treatment,

and follow-up of patient well-being in a systematic manner. The e-Health system will also allow for effective use of aggregated clinical information in designing and implementing public health policy,” said Mr. Young Chul Kim, World Bank Country Manager for Belarus. The project will also establish contemporary training labs for health professionals as well as a new neonatal care unit, contributing to the improvement of quality of life for Belarusians.

The newly approved Health System Modernization Project relies on the findings of the World Bank Public Expenditure Review for Belarus (2013), which highlighted the need for optimization of healthcare provision, increased emphasis on primary healthcare and preventive services, especially for non-communicable diseases, and better service-quality management and accountability for results.

“The project supports prevention, early detection and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, including hypertension, which is a major challenge for Belarus aging population. In addition, the project supports improvement of neonatal acute care for newborns. An integrated health information system would allow seamless information exchange between all levels of healthcare and with patients, leading to better control of diseases,” noted Ms. Susanna Hayrapetyan, Lead Health Specialist, World Bank Project Team Leader.

Since the Republic of Belarus joined the World Bank in 1992, lending commitments to the country have totaled \$1.7 billion. Apart from that, grant financing totaling \$28 million has been provided to various programs, including those with civil society organizations. With the approval of this project, the active investment lending portfolio financed by the World Bank includes nine operations totaling \$973 million.

<http://eng.belta.by/economics/view/world-bank-approves-125m-loan-for-belarus-healthcare-system-96470-2016/>

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# Plans to set up center of Chinese medicine in Gomel

GOMEL, 17 November (BelTA) – Plans have been made to set up a center of traditional Chinese medicine in the Belarusian city of Gomel. A relevant agreement was reached during the visit of an official delegation of Gomel Oblast to China's Sichuan Province, BelTA learned from the press service of the Gomel Oblast Executive Committee.

The delegation met with representatives of the Sichuan Provincial Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the city of Chengdu. The Chinese side was invited to consider several potential sites for the center.

The Chinese partners suggested it is necessary to establish an exchange of specialists at the initial stage of the project in order to train personnel for the center. The head of the Sichuan Provincial Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine was officially invited to visit Gomel and attend the 14th Gomel Economic Forum 2017.

The meeting with the Sichuan Province authorities discussed a wide range of matters related to economic cooperation between the two regions of Belarus and China. Local officials showed eagerness to import Belarus-made whey, dried and condensed milk, confectionery and alcohol products.

The parties signed a memorandum on the establishment of friendly cooperation between Gomel and Chengdu. A memorandum of understanding was concluded by the Gomel Oblast Office of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Sichuan Sub-council of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade.

The agreement on cooperation between Gomel Oblast and Sichuan Province was signed in May 2015. The document envisages cooperation based on partnership, equality, trust and mutual benefit

in such areas as economy, agriculture, healthcare and culture, education, sport and tourism. The parties agreed to establish direct contacts and twin-town ties between the cities of the two regions in order to develop cooperation in the abovementioned sectors.

Chengdu is the administrative center of Sichuan Province in the south-west of China. Its population is 14 million.

<http://eng.belta.by/society/view/plans-to-set-up-center-of-chinese-medicine-in-gomel-96427-2016/>