

Distance Learning in Urology Within the Framework of University Education

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Resume: The article presents the results of studying the problem of using distance technologies in the educational process of higher medical educational institutions in the specialty of urology. The advantages of distance learning for postgraduate education and the organization of advanced training courses for specialists are also noted.

Keywords: distance learning, urology, internet, technology.

Distance learning is an independent form of learning in which information technology is the leading tool. It ensures interaction between the teacher and the student at a distance, includes all the components inherent in the educational process and, at present, is implemented by specific modalities of Internet technologies that provide interactivity [1].

We live in a world where Internet technologies are taking over all areas of our lives – from personal communication to online shopping. The educational process is also very dynamically fitting into the framework of the Internet space. This is happening today at all levels of education, especially at the stage of university education. For this reason, the issues of organizing distance learning in such a way that the information received should be of high quality, there should not be any gaps in education and the level of existing knowledge is not reduced, are very relevant.

Until recently, distance learning, when any group of students, regardless of their number and location, could be reached in real time via telecommunications, was only a dream. But it took only a little time for such forms of learning to become an everyday reality. The widespread use of the Internet, the informatization of modern society and the introduction of innovative approaches to the learning process have led to the fact that distance learning technologies are used both for mastering individual advanced training courses and for obtaining higher education [2]. The main forms of distance learning are online and offline learning.

Learning via the Internet has a number of significant advantages:

- Flexibility - students can receive education at a time and place that suits them;
- Long-distance learning - students are not limited by distance and can study regardless of their place of residence;
- Cost-effectiveness - significantly reduces the cost of long trips to the place of study.

It should also be noted that distance learning is one of the most optimal forms of advanced training and postgraduate education. That is, with the expenditure of the most insignificant human and technical resources, it becomes possible to organize distance courses for advanced training in parallel with traditional teaching methods [3]. Distance education is no less relevant today than all other types of education. Modern technologies allow not only to get acquainted with lectures of leading specialists from all over the world, but also to actively interact with each other and with teachers [4].

The global trend of transition to non-traditional forms of education can also be seen in the growth in the number of universities providing training using distance learning technologies. An effective option for using such methods and technologies is the Moodle package, which is a content management system for a website, specially designed for teachers to create high-quality online courses. The term Moodle stands for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. Moodle is written in the

PHP programming language by Australian professor Martin Dungiarnos, translated into several dozen languages and used for teaching in more than 150 countries around the world. Its wide popularity was ensured by its ease of use and open source code. One of the universities in Uzbekistan that switched to a similar method of modular training was the Samarkand State Medical University (SSMU). In 2013, the moodle.sammu.uz e-learning system was introduced here. During its existence, the system has proven its effectiveness and had a positive impact on the quality of training of medical personnel. The moodle.sammu.uz platform fully justifies its purpose as a basis for distance learning. Moreover, such training is in no way inferior to traditional training and includes all the components inherent in the educational process: materials for practical classes, notes, lectures, video materials, tests for self-control, etc. [5].

Urology has always been and remains one of the most progressive medical specialties. Progress has not bypassed the issue of distance education in urology. Online courses for advanced training are offered by the European Association of Urology and American Urological Association (EAU, AUA), the International Society of Urologists (SIU), the University of Massachusetts, Stanford, Edinburgh, etc. [6].

The European Association of Urology (EAU) is a recognized authority in the global urological community. In 1973, the EAU was officially approved at the International Congress on Urology in Amsterdam. At that time, 259 members were accepted into the EAU, and today the Association includes more than 19 thousand urologists. The European Association of Urology is today a leading modern scientific organization in Europe, membership of which is open to every urologist, including urological nurses. The EAU is governed by an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee approves the work of individual centers, called upon to solve specific problems in fulfilling the main mission of the EAU - improving the quality of urological care in Europe.

The main objectives of the EAU are therefore to act as the representative body of all urologists in Europe, to promote the development of urology and its subspecialties and to implement medical standards in the provision of urological care, to encourage scientific research in urology and to provide an opportunity to announce the results of this research, to disseminate advances in urology in Europe and worldwide, to set standards for training and practice in urology in Europe, and to contribute to determining the direction of development of urological care in Europe. The set goals are achieved through various scientific, educational and journalistic areas of work, including holding conferences and educational sections, as well as disseminating medical literature and clinical practice guidelines. EAU Guidelines translated by the Russian Society of Urologists are the standard for providing urological care not only in Europe, but also in the CIS countries. Based on these recommendations, national guidelines and standards for providing care to urological patients are created. EAU recommendations, which can also be viewed remotely (by downloading them from the organization's website), provide access to the latest data on any urological pathology [7-13].

The EAU also includes the equally renowned European School of Urology (ESU). The main objective of the ESU is to provide each urologist with a comprehensive overview of all current publications and the latest research data in the field of urology. Each year, as part of the annual EAU Congress, ESU postgraduate educational courses are held, which include clinical and research areas. Naturally, given the huge audience of the EAU, the organization of such educational courses is directly related to Internet technologies and distance learning, since this is the only way to cover all urologists in different parts of the world.

The annual EAU Congress is the largest urology meeting in the world. In 2025, the 40th anniversary EAU Congress is scheduled for March 21-24 in Madrid. Online access to materials and webcasts of all sessions of the congress is provided on the electronic resource eaucongress.uroweb.org [14]. And once again, Internet technologies come into play, thanks to which all specialists and, of course, urologists, keep their finger on the pulse and are aware of all the events that are happening.

The Internet portal Uroweb.ru plays a special role in distance urological education in the CIS countries. It has been operating since 2010. The portal began its work when the Research Institute of

Urology (Moscow) together with the Interregional Public Organization of Urologists "Internet Forum of Urologists" and the Academy of Outpatient Urology project on the Internet platforms UroEdu.ru and Academy.UroWeb.ru provided the opportunity to take thematic courses in urology remotely. The portal Uroweb.ru is the main, leading project. The function of this portal is to promptly provide a wide audience of users with comprehensive information in the field of urology. This information includes all areas of urology and is constantly updated. The portal includes a number of subprojects: UroEdu, Uro.TV, Уперпа.FM, which can be easily accessed from the main portal. The objectives of the UroEdu project include: continuous additional professional education using distance technologies, i.e. this is where you can sign up for a training course, all the educational material is posted, and electronic certificates are issued after testing. Currently, the portal offers the opportunity to take distance learning courses after preliminary registration in a variety of areas of urology: urolithiasis, benign prostatic hyperplasia, male infertility, erectile dysfunction, etc. Anyone who is related to urology can become a participant in the distance learning course: from students to specialists of the highest level. This approach is especially interesting in the work of scientific student circles at urology departments. Uro.TV (urological TV) is a portal within Uroweb.ru, where all video content is posted - a kind of urological YouTube. New section is named "Уперпа.FM" - where specialists have possibility to listen to and download educational podcasts/audio recordings on urology and andrology.

The staff of the Urology Department of the Samarkand State Medical University, master's degree residents, clinical residents, as well as students - members of the scientific society, are registered on the Uroweb.ru portal and regularly take distance learning courses. After listening to the lectures of the course and solving test questions, the student receives a corresponding certificate. In addition, three employees of the Urology Department of the Samara State Medical University have been members of the American Association of Endourologists since 2018. This provides constant access to the electronic version of the Endourology journal - one of the most authoritative urological journals in the world; allows you to take part in online sessions of conferences and webinars.

Today, distance learning resources are an integral part of a full-fledged educational process. Using the possibilities of distance learning in urology allows for basic training of medical students in the bachelor's degree, opens up wide opportunities for postgraduate education and the creation of advanced training courses for urologists. It is impossible to imagine a modern educational system without distance learning technologies. It is important to use them for their intended purpose, constantly work on improving the existing knowledge base, and expand it with new reliable data. Internet platforms and distance learning portals are important components of the education of the future.

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