

The evolution of Cyprus school health services

Cyprus being a British Colony till 1960, delayed implementing School Health Services programs. The Colonial Authorities implemented mainly therapeutic programs of short duration during epidemics, as well as vaccination programs, mainly in rural schools. On the contrary, the Local School Authorities, consisting of Local Community Leaders, were periodically employing doctors in different towns, until 1914. The first Health visitor was employed in 1953.

After independence and till 1975, Doctors and Health Visitors were employed on a regular basis by the school authorities, only in Nicosia. Despite the need for School Health Services to be recognized and monitored by the Government, it was only in 1976 and after pressure by the Parents Associations, that the corresponding Law was approved by the Ministers' Council. This date is considered important, because the organization of the new services was influenced by the beliefs and knowledge of the time, two years before the Alma Ata Declaration (1978). Services now covered the whole of the island and the School Health Services are performed by Professional Health Visitors and School Doctors.