



RIGA MEDICAL COLLEGE
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA

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1 Hipokrata Str., Riga, LV-1079, Latvia
Phone +371 67840744 Fax +371 67547797 E-mail: koledza@rmkoledza.lv

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**RIGA MEDICAL COLLEGE
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2021. - 2027.**

Riga, 2021

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Introduction

Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia (hereinafter - LU RMC) is an agency founded by the University of Latvia, which implements the first level professional higher education programs “Medicine” (41721), “Massage and hydrotherapy” (41722) and “Dispensing Optician” (41722) in the study direction HEALTH CARE. LU RMC was founded in 1980 as the Riga Medical School No 5, which implemented education programmes for nurses and paediatric nurses. Since 2004, the school is proceeding to work as Riga Medical College, implementing study programmes “Nursing” and “Medicine”. Since 2010, the College has been part of the University of Latvia (hereinafter UL). The College has been accredited since 2005 (Accreditation sheet No.087), study programs accredited in 2005, re-accredited in 2011.

LU RMC provides students with quality education and professional qualifications by implementing study programmes based on achievable results.

LU RMC ensures the development of human resources in the healthcare sector, the educational environment based on the integration of studies and science contributes to the development of the healthcare sector in Latvia

According to the visit and evaluation of international experts in 2013, the study programs “Medicine” and “Nursing” have been ranked into the first quality group of the study program distribution of the Higher Education Council and are considered sustainable. Study direction Health Care and study programmes are accredited until May 30, 2019 (Accreditation sheet No.70). Accreditation extended until June 30, 2022 (amendments to the Law on Higher Education. Transitional Provisions section 48, subsection 2).

The study programme “Nursing” (41723), will be implemented at LU RMC until June 30, 2022, due to the reform of the profession and the transition to a Bachelor's degree programme.

Programme “Medicine” (41721), duration of full-time studies - 3 years, obtains the fourth level professional qualification: Physician Assistant or Physician Assistant in Ambulatory Care, or Physician Assistant in Emergency Care.

Implementation of the study program “Massage and Hydrotherapy” (41722) started after receiving the license No. 041020-3 in 2015/2016 academic year, graduates obtain a fourth level professional qualification: Massage Therapist.

The study programme "Dispensing Optician" (41722) is the most recent licensed programme, launched in 2020, the programme is designed to improve the labour market in the field of optometry in line with European requirements.

This is the second strategy that LU RMC is developing, were part of the strategic objectives are being transferred to the strategy for the next period (2021-2027).

Strategic directions of LU RMC:

Development of studies;

Integration and internationalisation of studies and applied research;

Institutional capacity building, improvement of the educational environment, promotion of green thinking;

Contribution to society

The Strategy is designed to stimulate the development of LU RMC, enabling staff cooperation with academic community, public administration institutions, social partners and employers.

The Strategy complies with the Regulation of LU RMC, developed in accordance with the State policy planning documents, guidelines in education and science, economic and labour market development trends and demographic forecasts.

LU RMC Strategy, after approval by the College Council and the Senate of the UL, is a fundamental document for the development of annual action plans, thus ensuring the implementation of the Strategy, its execution and achievements are described in the self- assessment report, which is the basis for refining the strategic plan.

Strategy is based on Mission, Vision and Development Areas.

Analysis of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths:

- professionalism and loyalty of academic and general staff
- successful cooperation with potential employers (health care institutions in Riga and regions)
- competitive education with opportunities for continuing education
- positive employer feedback on graduate readiness for the labour market
- job offers during studies, the chance to get to know the future employer and meet a mentor;
- a comprehensive network of health care institutions with contractual ties for provision of student placements
- modern teaching, methodological and medical equipment, frequently updated library with methodological and scientific literature, publicly accessible electronic data bases.

- efficient attraction and use of financial resources, including the European Structural Funds
- optimal attraction of students and their interest in the study process
- study places financed from the State budget
- extensive network of partner universities for the implementation of international activities, organizing student and teacher mobilities, exchange of experience and scientific research activities
- know-how in organizing international scientific conferences
- active student participation in mobility projects
- a well-equipped student hostel, located in the same building as the theoretical teaching base
- Proximity to Riga East Clinical University Hospital as a major placement provisional base.

Weaknesses:

- insufficient effort in attraction of new academic staff
- insufficient foreign language skills of students and academic staff
- insufficient student involvement in projects and research work
- nursing education reform results in fewer programmes and impacts on national budget funding

Opportunities:

- expansion of further education and professional development education programme offer, including the development of e-learning, distance learning and hybrid models.
- attracting funding from the European Union (hereinafter EU) and other funds
- increasing the efficiency and capacity of the college administrative staff
- increasing the professional and scientific capacity of academic and general staff
- modernization of infrastructure and active usage in the study process and scientific activities
- develop future study programmes in partnership with employers.

Threats:

- unfavourable demographic situation in the country
- gradual aging of academic staff
- insufficient overall funding for the health care sector with an impact on the esteem of acquired professions and the competitiveness of the field of study
- competition in higher education (including internationally) in health care sector

Vision

Riga Medical College of the University of Latvia is a recognized and prestigious first level higher education institution in the field of health care and lifelong learning in Latvia and beyond.

Mission

The mission of RMC LU is to prepare high quality first level higher education professionals in the field of health care, in order to ensure that the competences acquired during studies are in line with the requirements of the Latvian economy and the EU, as well as to form a solid foundation for lifelong learning and to develop research activities.

Values

RMK LU has a professional, efficient and responsible team, which fulfils its mission in line with the needs of society.

This is achieved through a simple, well-planned and well-managed system of work organisation that is implemented quickly, skillfully and effectively, using resources efficiently.

Society and cooperation partners can be confident that graduates will be competent employees in healthcare institutions. It is prestigious to study at LU RMC, and the qualifications and competences acquired are highly valued in the sector.

Excellence - striving for excellence in your field, positive competition between educational institutions.

Openness - staff and management ready to take on challenges and work at a new level.

Professionalism - high standards of mission fulfilment, which includes evidence-based knowledge, experience, willingness to improve and develop individual and team professional skills.

Quality - innovative learning environments and e-learning. Dynamic development of the content of study programmes. Development and use of digital learning tools in the study process.

Competence - the diploma issued by the LU RMC implies - a competent healthcare professional working in the sector.

Accountability - both the work done by each individual and the internal collaboration with colleagues and teamwork to maintain the high reputation and public image of LU RMC.

Collaboration - the basis for coherent and successful action, remembering that educating healthcare professionals is a team effort. Collaboration applies to the College as a whole as well as to partners within and outside the sector.

Safety - refers to the safety of both students and patients, and a safe working environment for staff.

Respect - the cornerstone of the humanitarian mission towards the patient, towards partners, towards colleagues, towards the team, towards the diverse community.

Innovation - innovation based on international experience, digitisation of processes and educational content.

Strategical objectives

- I. Development of the study direction and quality assurance for the provision of excellence-oriented study programmes.
- II. Integration and internationalization of studies and scientific activities.
- III. Improving institutional capacity, the learning environment, green thinking through the development of an innovation- and high-tech infrastructure, competence development of academic staff.
- IV. Participation in public education and lifelong learning of health personnel.

I. Development of the study direction and quality assurance for the provision of excellence-oriented study programmes

1.1. Purposefully plan and implement high-quality study programmes with a focus on results, in accordance with economic development trends and labour market requirements.

Uzdevumi:

- To improve study programmes to ensure the unity of education and practice
- To increase the number of study programmes based on the labour market forecasts in Europe and Latvia
- To develop further education, non-formal professional development and interest education programmes, providing distance learning opportunities
- To increase the efficiency of the study programme implementation and the employment of graduates through cooperation and feedback from employers and professional organizations
- To advocate student involvement in the delivery of quality education
- To improve the quality assessment process of the study direction and to elevate the student judgement of the study process quality
- To improve the verification system of achieved learning outcomes, to gain assurance of their compliance with the planned results by introducing a modular system in professional study courses of the study programmes

- Continue cooperation with the UL and other higher education institutions, engaging the intellectual potential of guest lecturers from other higher education institutions in the study process implementation
- increase the proportion of academic staff with scientific degrees

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Professional standards and qualification requirements for Physician Assistants and Physician Assistants in Emergency Care, developed jointly by educators and employers	2	3
Number of study programmes	4	6
Profesionālās pilnveides neformālās un interešu izglītības programmas	8	20
Number of professional further education programmes	6	12
Number of graduates in relation to the enrolment rates per year	75%	Ne mazāk par 75%
Implementation of surveys in study courses and at the end of study year on the quality of the study course	80%	100%
Student participation in the survey on the quality of the study programme	80%	100%
Student evaluation of the study programme quality	7,8	Not lower than 8,00
Alumni participation in surveys	60%	80%
Employment of alumni in the field 2-3 years after graduation	81%	90%
Employer participation in the survey	Survey of employers	Survey of employers, heads of medical institutions and departments
Total increase in the number of students	487	30%
Number of guest lecturers	3	6
Percentage of academic staff with a scientific degree	Proportion of PhDs 12.5%	Proportion of PhDs 20%
Obtaining the status of a free listener	2	4
Graduates employed as middle or senior managers	85%	90%
Graduates earn above the national average	1207 euro	1500 euro

1.2 To improve and regularly evaluate the assessment of professional competences for the registry of nurses, physician assistants, midwives and nursing assistants, ensuring the human resource development in the health care sector

Tasks

- Update and revise examination questions, involving representatives of professional organizations and employers, to ensure that the exam content meets the requirements of the labour market and novelties in health care.
- Prepare and provide study materials on e-platform for distance learning applicants
- organize further education courses for applicants returning to the profession;
- work with employers to ensure that applicants can safely return to the profession and work after their absence.

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Updated and revised examination questions in line with the requirements of the professional standard	2 qualifications/specialties	3 qualifications/specialties
Prepared and provided study material on e-platform for distance learning	0	2
Implemented further education courses for medical staff developed, coordinated with professional institutions (e.g. associations)	7	20
Number of staff trained	100	550
Returned to health care after leave of absence (persons)	114	150

2. Integration and internationalization of studies and scientific activities.

2.1. Integration of studies and scientific activities

Tasks:

- To promote teaching staff participation in scientific research and obtained result presentation in Latvian-wide scientific conferences and seminars
- To ensure and support the expansion of teaching staff publications in Latvian- wide editions
- To ensure the development of methodological teaching materials, including the latest scientific research
- To advocate research conducted by LU RMC teaching staff and students in mass media and popular scientific literature
- To promote student engagement in the groundwork of scientific publications of teaching staff, to update and promote the publicity of student research work
- To provide applied research conferences for students and teachers
- To develop internal scientific projects of the college, to increase the participation of students and lecturers in scientific projects
- To increase the financial distribution from college revenue for research activities

- To develop access to world-renowned scientific databases, to ensure the inclusion of the latest scientific research in the study process
- To improve student scientific research skills by working in the laboratory and analysing scientific literature, current research and its methodology
- Involve students in the organizational work of international and local conferences
- To promote activities of the student council by organizing events related to current scientific research in the field
- Establish an annual award for the best student research
- Establish an annual award for the best teaching staff scientific research performance
- To reduce the fragmentation of research topics by synchronizing them with the needs of employers and current concerns in Latvia and abroad

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Promotion of teaching staff participation in scientific research and presentation of the obtained results in Latvian-wide scientific conferences and seminars	12	20
Ensuring and supporting the development of teaching staff publications in Latvian-wide editions	6	12
Development of methodological teaching material containing most recent scientific research	5	10
Promotion of research conducted by LU RMC lecturers and students in mass media and popular scientific literature	1x per annum	regularly
Involvement of students in the preparation of scientific publications, promotion and updating of students' research publications	6	10
Promotion and updating of publicity of student research work in Latvian-wide conferences and seminars	6	12
Applied research conferences for students and teaching staff	1x per annum	2x per annum
Redistribution of college revenue for research and scientific activities	17%	20%
Access to world-renowned scientific databases	5	8
Annual scholarships for students for active participation in research projects, conferences	5 scholarships in academic year	5 scholarships in academic year
Enhancing students' scientific research skills by analysing scientific literature and current research and its methodology	15% of eligible qualification papers are marked "7" and above	30% of eligible qualification papers are marked "7" and above
Student involvement in the organizational work of international and local conferences	2x per annum	4x per annum
Activity of the student council in organizing	1 event per	2 events per annum

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
events related to current scientific research in the field	annum	
Annual award for the best student research	1 award per annum	2 awards per annum
Annual award for the best teaching staff scientific research performance	1 award per annum	2 awards per annum
Alignment of research topics with employers' needs and current issues in Latvia and abroad	3 topics per annum	3 topics per annum
Student publications in the College Association journal of scientific articles	1 publication per annum	2 publications per annum

2.2. *Internationalization of studies and scientific activities*

Tasks:

- To stimulate the teaching staff participation in scientific research and the presentation of obtained results in international scientific conferences
- To ensure and support the development of teacher publications in international editions
- To trigger and promote the publicity of student research work outside Latvian borders
- To promote student involvement in foreign scientific conferences
- Organize international scientific conferences in an interdisciplinary aspect
- To endorse international scientific research collaboration by signing co-operation agreements in scientific activities with foreign universities and giving financial priority to international research activities
- To stimulate the attraction of foreign lecturers within mobility programs
- Organize an annual student and teacher conference on the knowledge gained during scientific business trips, Erasmus and other mobilities

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
The presentation of obtained scientific research results in international scientific conferences	2	5
Teaching staff publications in international editions	1	3
Publicity of student research work outside Latvian borders	2	4
Student involvement in foreign scientific conferences	no	2
International scientific conferences in an interdisciplinary aspect	1x every 2 years	At least 1x every two years

Access to world-renowned scientific databases	3	5
International scientific research collaboration by signing co-operation agreements in scientific activities with foreign universities and giving financial priority to international research	3 cooperation agreements	2 transnational researches
Attracted foreign lecturers within mobility programs	10	15
Involvement of exchange students in scientific and applied conferences	1x per annum	1x per annum
Annual student and teacher conference on the knowledge gained during scientific business trips, Erasmus and other mobilities	1x per annum	1x per annum

2.3. *International cooperation to ensure competitiveness; development of studies and scientific activities*

Tasks:

- Support the participation of college students and academic staff in International mobility programs
- Strengthen and expand the range of international partners through partnership projects with the EU bordering countries
- To increase the competitiveness of the college by developing cooperation and exchange of good practices with higher education institutions of the EU and its neighboring countries
- To promote the dissemination of information and publicity about international activities
- Continue to attract foreign lecturers and guest lecturers, thus providing non-mobile students with an international component (internationalization at home / internationalization of the study process)
- Development of joint study courses in the Baltic Sea region, with the aim to even out the education of health care professionals in the region and in Europe

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Academic staff mobilities: with partner universities outgoing /incoming	1	15/12
Student mobilities: with partner universities outgoing /incoming	2	15/15
Erasmus+ and Nordplus financially supported and implemented intensive program projects		4
Jointly developed and implemented study courses in cooperation with partner universities	0	2
Foreign guest lecturer involvement in the implementation of study courses	1	4

3. Improvement of institutional capacity and educational environment by developing innovation-based and high technology infrastructure, competence development for academic staff.

3.1. Institutional capacity building and promotion of green thinking

Tasks:

- Develop a staff selection policy to attract qualified, competent and loyal academic and administrative staff
- To increase the proportion of elected academic staff in study programs
- To stimulate and support the professional development and lifelong learning of academic and general staff
- Develop and implement a result-oriented staff selection and remuneration system
- Develop and support academic and general staff motivation policy
- To reduce the share and importance of the State budget in the college financial plan by increasing the amount of EU funding, paid study/further education offer and the share of third party funding through participating in projects and procurements
- Apply structural changes to increase the capacity and efficiency of administrative staff
- Continue to work in LAIS, join the eduGAIN system for working with students and staff, improve and develop e-learning;
- Reduce the number of printed documents by moving to e-documents;
- To intensify cooperation with community in order to increase the recognition of the college and attraction of students by implementing resourceful and purposeful participation in various and diverse events in Riga and regions, activating cooperation with secondary schools

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Staff selection and further training	Started	Designed, implemented and operating successfully, achieving the above performance indicators
Motivating staff remuneration system	Started	A results-based remuneration system for staff developed and implemented
Databases and information system	Electronic catalogue created	Full transition to electronic document management
Share of the State budget in the total financial plan of the college	75%	65%

Proportion of documents signed with eSignature (eparaksts)	30%	100%
Development of e-studies	Join UL MOODLE version 3.11, sign a maintenance contract with automatic information renewal	Implemented, maintained and operating successfully

3.2. *Development of educational environment and infrastructure*

Tasks:

- To improve the learning environment by providing a clinical environment-approximated modern simulation mannequins and other technologies, creating a clinical simulation centre
- To implement the construction project of the college conference and training centre, expanding the area of premises intended for the auditoriums and pre-clinic study practice
- to implement the construction plan for the "Patient Academy", to create a massage room, a water treatment room, a laboratory for training dispensing opticians, to develop students' professional skills and competences, as well as to provide lifelong learning;
- Continue modernization of IT and infrastructure
- To improve library collections and information resources in the study direction Health Care by increasing the share of electronic resources

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Modernization and adaptation of work environment for study and research purposes, optimization of study process	E-Studies on Moodle platform available for students and academic staff Established database of the best (from 7 points) qualification papers	100% of study courses available on E-studies
Provision of interactive methodological materials in the study process	2	5
Provision of interactive methodological materials in the study process	Four simulation laboratories set up	Continue to develop and equip laboratories according to the needs of the programmes
Technologies available for online studies	Attālinātām studijām izmantotas platformas MS Teams, ZOOM	Continue to improve according to needs

4. Participation in public education and lifelong learning for healthcare workers

4.1. To learn about and participate in the activities of the EU Health Programme 2021-2027 in the implementation of the EU health objectives

Tasks:

- within the scope of their competences, the faculty members of the LU RMC organise a series of lectures and seminars on healthy lifestyle, healthy nutrition, the need for physical activity, reduction of harmful habits, and prevention of trauma;
- LU RMC participates in procurement campaigns organised by the Ministry of Health (hereinafter - MoH) and the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter - MoES), as well as by local governments and public organisations, creating information campaigns on health promotion topics;
- taking into account the ageing population, to develop further training and interest-based education programmes for medical and nursing staff and patients' relatives on the specific health needs of the elderly;
- engage in research on mental health issues, burnout reduction and recommendations for the population and the medical professionals;
- monitor epidemics and bioterrorism surveillance in the EU;
- increase capacity to address new health challenges such as climate change adaptation
- base the education of medical staff on a sustainable policy developed by the MoH and supported by professional organisations;
- cooperation projects with general education schools;
- development of international cooperation projects with the “Patient Academy” patient organization.

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Within the scope of their competences, the faculty members of LU RMC healthy nutrition, the need for physical activity, reduction of harmful habits, and prevention of trauma.	2	6
Participation in MoH and MoE procurements	0	2
Conducting research on public health topics	3	9
Lecture series on healthy lifestyle in general education schools	2	4

4.2. *Following the Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027 (MoEPRD project), improve digital skills of teaching staff, students, promote the use of digital tools available in healthcare in society.*

Tasks:

- Continue to develop digital skills for staff and students;
- Educate medical practitioners and patients in line with healthcare needs and technological opportunities;
- Participate in MoH and local government procurements with the defined objective of educating the public to improve digital skills in order to make more effective use of the digital solutions offered.

<i>Performance indicators</i>	<i>Indicator in 2021</i>	<i>Indicator in 2027</i>
Develop a study course (training module) on "Digital Skills in Healthcare" for both students and healthcare professionals	0	1
Number of trainees in the study course (training module) "Digital Skills in Healthcare"	0	100

Steps and prerequisites for implementing the strategy.

1. Approval of the Strategy by the UL Senate.
2. Establishment and approval of annual work plans in line with the objectives of the Strategy.
3. Driving and monitoring processes in line with strategic objectives.
4. Monitoring the implementation of the LU RMC Strategy.
5. Annual evaluation of the progress of the implementation of the Strategy.
6. Strong commitment of the team to the strategy.

Binding regulatory documents

1. Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027 "Skills for the Future Society".
2. Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027.
3. Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 394 of 7 August 2017 "Conceptual Report on Health Care System Reform".
4. Strategy of the University of Latvia 2021-2027