

PRESS RELEASE

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Zagreb University School of Medicine
Šalata 3b
10000 Zagreb
Croatia

Phone: ++385-1-4590-254

Fax: ++385-1-4590-222

Mail: dario.sambunjak@mef.hr

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Unemployed less frequently use preventive health care services

ZAGREB – Unemployed people in Croatia use preventive health care services much less than employed, shows a study published in the new, thematic issue of Croatian Medical Journal on poverty and human development.

The study, conducted on a representative sample of Croatian population, showed that healthy unemployed persons almost two times less frequently attend general preventive examinations, and significantly less frequently control blood pressure and sugar. Among those with cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, unemployed persons less frequently undergo influenza immunization and general preventive examinations. The frequency of receiving doctor's advice for food habits changes was equal among unemployed and employed.

Although equity in health sector is one of the central aims of public health policy internationally and in Croatia, new study shows that there are significant differences in use of preventive health care services, depending on the state of employment. The only other study that addressed this question was an Australian study which reached the similar results.

Researchers from Andrija Štampar School of Public Health in Zagreb, Croatia, conclude that “in order to achieve equal access for equal need, health care system should provide additional

attention to vulnerable groups such as the unemployed". Furthermore, authors stress the importance of heightening awareness of psychological problems, such as depression and anxiety, that are common in the group of unemployed, and that may be causes of abstaining from seeking health care.

Corresponding author:

Luka Vončina, M.D.

Andrija Štampar School of Public Health

Rockefellerova 4

10000 Zagreb

Croatia

Phone: 0914672546

Fax: 014684452

lvoncina@snz.hr