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**KAZAKHSTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Expanding Horizons for Quality Health Care

**USAID partners with students and staff to improve quality of health care in Kazakhstan**



Photo: USAID Quality Health Care Project

*Medical students, above, during a lecture at Kazakhstan National Medical University.*

***“If we implement these new standards and ideas, it will lead to effective and efficient health care in Kazakhstan,” says Zarina M., a medical student who attended the joint USAID-KNMU lectures.***

According to Kazakhstan National Medical University (KNMU) staff, classes in recent years are filled with a new kind of medical student. “The modern Kazakhstani medical student is highly curious, wants to expand his or her horizons, and has a thirst for change,” said Botagoz Turdalieva, Chair of Healthcare Policy and Management and Director of the Evidence Based Medicine Center at KNMU. The government of Kazakhstan and USAID are working together to chart a path toward instilling high-quality, evidence-based health care throughout this former Soviet Republic. Evidence-based medicine is a patient-centered health care approach. It reduces the cost of health care by following diagnosis and treatment protocols based on research evidence from best practices.

In the latest step on this path toward a modern health care system, the USAID Quality Health Care Project and KNMU staff joined forces in December 2010 and June 2011 to provide a series of interactive lectures to Kazakhstani medical students on improving the quality of health care by integrating evidence-based approaches at all levels of service delivery. Since 1994, USAID has collaborated with the government of Kazakhstan to institute comprehensive reforms and raise awareness among patients and medical students. USAID outreach to students is introducing and institutionalizing a new way of thinking about health care.

These new approaches are showing results. After one year of implementation in Kazakhstan, participating pilot facilities diagnosed four times as many patients with hypertension as in the previous year. In a country where cardiovascular disease is the greatest public health threat, the quality improvement approach is saving thousands of lives through increased diagnoses and earlier treatment.

Through the work of the USAID Quality Health Care Project, the government of Kazakhstan and USAID are fostering the desire for change among a new generation of medical students to ensure a future of modern, evidence-based health care in Kazakhstan.