

Education

IN LIFESTYLE MEDICINE

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NextGenU.org's Free, Globally Available Online Training in Lifestyle Medicine



Abstract: *NextGenU.org now uniquely offers a free, accredited, globally-available online training in Lifestyle Medicine. Courses such as Lifestyle Medicine for Primary Care Physicians, Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders/Tobacco Use, Substance Use Disorder Screening, Public Health Nutrition, and more are competency-based and include knowledge transfer, a web-based global peer community of practice, and local, skills-based mentorships. Trainings use existing, expert-created resources from governments, universities, and medical specialty societies thus ensuring their quality and simultaneously making them free of costs, advertisement, and geographic barriers. To offer free credits for these courses, NextGenU.org partners with universities and professional societies. NextGenU.org's comprehensive Lifestyle Medicine Curriculum will launch in early 2017.*

Keywords: Flipped classroom; free; health sciences education; lifestyle medicine; online

Anyone seeking globally free, certified training in lifestyle medicine (LM) now has a solution through NextGenU.org. NextGenU.org

Since 2012, NextGenU.org has provided the first and only free and accredited programs in higher education. All courses are competency based and include online knowledge transfer, a web-based global peer community of practice, and local, skills-based mentorships. Trainings use existing, publicly posted, expert-created resources from governments, peer-reviewed journals, universities, and medical specialty societies, ensuring the quality of our trainings, and making them free of costs, advertisements, and geographic barriers.

for Disease Control and Prevention, USC Greenville Medicine, and the World Health Organization. NextGenU.org has registrants from 145 countries, generating near-100% pilot-student completion rates in adopting institutions (though much lower retention for individual users), with student enhancement of knowledge and skills, learner satisfaction, and patient outcomes identical to or superior to the world's finest universities, from the United States to Kenya.¹⁻⁵

 Since 2012, NextGenU.org has provided the first and only free and accredited programs in higher education 

To offer credit for its courses and programs, NextGenU.org partners with universities and professional societies such as (for these LM trainings) the American College of Preventive Medicine, Institute for Lifestyle Medicine at Harvard, NATO Science for Peace, Stanford Medicine, US Centers

In 2015-2016, NextGenU.org focused on public health offerings and developing a MedSchoolInABox, including now having full residency programs in family medicine, preventive medicine, and pediatrics underway. One of NextGenU's most important milestones is the development of a

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comprehensive Lifestyle Medicine Curriculum (LMC), launching in early 2017.

Lifestyle Medicine Curriculum

NextGenU.org's introductory LM course is a collection of modules focusing on the key areas of LM: Nutrition and Obesity, Physical Activity, Health Behavior Change, Sleep Health, Smoking Cessation, Alcohol Abuse, Emotional Wellness, and Sexuality and Health.

This *Lifestyle Medicine for Primary Care Physicians* course was created by Lilach Malatsky, Chairwoman of the Israeli Society of Lifestyle Medicine (of the Israeli Association of Family Physicians), and uses competencies adapted from the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, the American College of Preventive Medicine, and the Israeli Society of Lifestyle Medicine.

This course teaches primary care physicians how to prevent, treat, and reverse disease through evidenced-based practice (by means of online didactics), and provides an opportunity to plan strategies and practice techniques to help patients improve their health (with locally and globally available peer- and mentor-based activities).

There are 10 modules to complete through online study (the estimated time of completion for all essential readings is 20 hours), peer-to-peer activities, and activities with a mentor that the learner or the learner's institution identifies. These modules should provide an introductory understanding of

- the principles of LM, and the evidence basis of its practice
- the structure of the change process and the tools necessary to support health behavior change
- physical activity, how it affects health, and writing an exercise prescription
- human nutrition and the connection between nutrition and illness, the risk

factors for obesity, and nutrition prescriptions

- the role of sleep in health and chronic disease
- the role of smoking prevention and cessation in preventing and treating chronic disease, and tools for smoking cessation strategies
- alcohol use disorders and the role of alcohol use in creating and aggravating chronic disease, and tools for strategies to reduce alcohol-related risks
- the relationship between emotional distress and poor health, and tools for managing personal and patients' emotional wellness
- the relationship between sexuality and health, and sex-related counseling issues
- the skills for developing and implementing personal and clinical LM action plans.

As an example of a peer-based activity required to receive a certificate of completion, learners will support a patient in lifestyle-related health behavior change. Learners will meet with a patient and practice using key behavioral methods. By the end of the course, learners will submit an assignment for their peers' review that summarizes this practical clinical project, and they will also participate as reviewers, co-creating an authored, peer-reviewed global atlas of LM case studies. Other methods of assessment include practice quizzes in each module and a final test, as well as a chance for the learner to give an assessment of this training. All components of this training (like all NextGenU.org trainings) are free, including registration, learning, testing, and a certificate of completion.

Using the same course creation approach and course structure, NextGenU.org also offers these further courses within the LM curricular umbrella:

- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Substance Use Disorders—Primary Care
- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Substance Use Disorders—Screening
- Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorders
- Prevention and Treatment of Tobacco Use
- Preventive Medicine Residency
- Public Health Nutrition

Call for Collaboration

We hope this LM network finds these courses useful, and encourage readers to contact us to help them take and offer these trainings, and to co-develop additional trainings.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. [AJLM](#)

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