



Press release

STADA Health Report 2017: Young adults lack health education

Bad Vilbel, November 15, 2017 – The STADA Health Report 2017 on the topic “Extra lessons needed: Should health be taught in school?” has reached a worrisome conclusion: about two thirds of the 18-24 year olds in Germany have an insufficient level of health competence. They are in the dark when it comes to basic health-related topics. The results of the report show that extra lessons are needed for the German education system as well.

“Health-related topics are underrepresented in Germany, especially among the younger sections of the population between 18 and 24 years of age. This is surprising because particularly in the age of social media the trend toward ‘empowered patients’ is impossible to overlook”, says Dr. Claudio Albrecht, Chairman of the Executive Board at STADA. “Knowledge of our health knows no age barriers – the earlier the better. We therefore believe that one of the most critical questions to be looked at in our education system is how this awareness can be reinforced. With our Health Report 2017, we want to make a real contribution to health awareness and shake things up with our www.health-checker.de digital campaign.”

“Generation clueless” in health-related questions

The current report from the “all the best” initiative wants to learn how health knowledge is conveyed and how well informed the younger generation is. We therefore asked people between 18 and 24 years of age about their health education. A specific focus was also their time at school. The results are alarming: the majority of the young adults lack sufficient health literacy. 49 percent of them have a problematic, 17 percent an even inadequate health literacy. Only 34 percent have a sufficient health literacy, as determined using the short version of the standardized European Health Literacy Survey. The deficits are having an impact: the young adults have greater difficulty navigating around the health care system, have more difficulty understanding instructions from doctors and take less care of their own health. In order to find out where the blind spots are particularly significant, health literacy was transferred to other relevant questions from day-to-day life. Here, too, there were concerning misconceptions.

Executive Board: Dr. Claudio Albrecht (Chairman) / Mark Keatley / Dr. Barthold Piening
Chairman of the Supervisory Board: Dr. Günter von Au



An overview of the largest misconceptions

- Colds and antibiotics: only 40 percent of the 18 to 24-year-olds know how long they are contagious when they have a cold. 13 percent stop antibiotic treatment too early. 38 percent do not know what antibiotic resistance means and 36 percent wrongly believe that antibiotics help treat viruses.
- Sexually-transmitted diseases: the knowledge deficit in this area is alarming. 85 percent of the participants do not know that unprotected sex can lead to the transmission of HIV, syphilis and HPV. Only 54 percent say that they always use a condom when they sleep with a new partner.
- Doctors: 30 percent of those surveyed do not know that gynecologists primarily treat women. 31 percent wrongly believe that only men can go to a urologist. 18 percent of participants in the study wrongly believe that orthopedists also treat organ damage.
- Health care system: about 25 percent of the young adults believe that there is still a fee to visit the doctor. 35 percent of those surveyed have no idea that family doctors are paid per patient by health insurers. Only 62 percent of the participants are aware that health insurance organizations are financed by contributions from those they insure.

Health rarely seen in curriculum

But what are the reasons behind these deficits? What we do not learn in school is rarely actively acquired later in life. And health is rarely a subject of study in classrooms. Only 23 percent say that they learned most about health at school. For 69 percent, health topics played only a minor role or no role at all in their lessons. “There is no health education in Germany”, complains doctor and author Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer, who helped to develop the study. “Young people are usually healthy and do not need to worry about health topics. All the more important then that the topic have a fixed place at school and that it is conveyed in an interesting manner. Only in this way can people prevent possible diseases in later years.” This is an expectation, however, that schools often fail to meet: only 27 percent learned anything about common illnesses, 21 percent learned something about prevention and 13 percent learned something about the health care system.



80 percent demand that “health” be a school subject.

The STADA Health Report 2017 shows a tremendous backlog, but also a way to resolve the situation: for 36 percent of those surveyed with sufficient health literacy, the topic of health played a major role at school. This applies to only 25 percent of those surveyed with inadequate health literacy. This result makes abundantly clear that health in school curricula makes a positive contribution. Various ministries, scientists and initiatives have been promoting the idea of “health as a school subject” for a long time. This also applies for 80 percent of the 18 to 24-year-olds who would welcome such a school subject. Prof. Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann, a leading expert in this field and one of the co-developers of the study, is pleased with this result: “It confirms that those people who believe such a program would make sense are also those that are impacted. The generation seems to realize that health is their most valuable asset and that knowledge can help to prevent illnesses. Health needs a fixed place in the classroom, either as its own subject or it needs to be integrated into other subjects.

Digital awareness campaign #HealthChecker

With its current digital #HealthChecker campaign, STADA is making an initial contribution to raising health knowledge among young adults. A key element in this regard is the website www.health-checker.de. Facts from the study are being presented here. An interactive knowledge test also encourages a self-check of participants’ health awareness. After each question, the user finds out whether or not he answered the question correctly and how those surveyed in the STADA Health Report responded. In addition, further health-related information is offered after each question.

Methodology of the STADA Health Report 2017

The STADA Health Report 2017 is based on a population-representative study from the consulting and market research agency Kantar Health on behalf of STADA Arzneimittel AG. They surveyed 2,000 young people aged between 18 and 24 about their health education. Health literacy was calculated based on the short form of the EU-wide standardized and validated Health Literacy Survey. The Report determined health knowledge and the educational topics on the basis of a questionnaire developed by physician Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer and Prof. Dr. Klaus Hurrelmann, Professor of Public Health and Education at the Hertie School of Governance.

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About STADA Arzneimittel AG

STADA Arzneimittel AG is a publicly-listed company with headquarters in Bad Vilbel, Germany. STADA consistently focuses on a multi-pillar strategy of generics and branded products (OTC) with an increasingly international market orientation. Worldwide, STADA is represented in more than 30 countries with more than 50 subsidiaries. Branded products such as Grippostad and Ladival are among the highest selling in their product categories in Germany. In financial year 2016, STADA achieved adjusted Group sales of Euro 2,167.2 million, adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of Euro 398 million and adjusted net income of Euro 177.3 million. As of December 31, 2016, STADA employed 10,900 people worldwide.

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