

**Katerina B. Levchenko,**

*Doctor of Law, Professor*

*(International Women's Rights Center "La Strada Ukraine", Kiev, Ukraine);*

**Maryna M. Lehenka,**

*(International Women's Rights Center "La Strada Ukraine", Kiev, Ukraine)*

## **POWERS OF HEALTH CARE AUTHORITIES IN IMPLEMENTING THE WORK IN THE AREA OF PREVENTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

*Domestic violence is a gross violation of human rights, which mostly affects women and children. 44% of Ukrainian population experienced domestic violence in their lives. The definition of violence in the family and its kinds (physical, psychological, sexual, economic) is provided in the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Domestic Violence". There is another term – "domestic violence", which is used in the Council of Europe Convention # 210 on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and combating these phenomena. This Convention has been signed but not yet ratified by Ukraine. The term "domestic violence" is wider compared with the term "violence in the family" because the range of persons who fall under this definition is expanded.*

*The list of agencies and institutions entrusted with the implementation of measures to prevent violence in the family is provided in the Art. 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On prevention of the violence in the family". This list includes specially authorized executive body on prevention of the violence in the family; relevant departments of internal affairs agencies; the guardianship and custody agencies; specialized institutions for persons who committed domestic violence and victims of such violence – namely, crisis centers for family members, where domestic violence has been committed or there is a real danger of its commission and centers of medical and social rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence.*

*The agencies and institutions that can assist in implementation of measures to prevent domestic violence (according to c. 2 of the Art. 3 of the Law) are the executive authorities, local governments, enterprises, institutions and organizations irrespective of ownership, association of citizens and individuals. Details of powers are prescribed in some Articles of the Law of Ukraine "On prevention of domestic violence". Agencies and health care institutions are not defined among such subjects, but they play an important role in assisting victims of domestic violence, including medical. Their general powers concern the provision of medical assistance to victims of domestic violence, and special powers mostly concern in guaranteeing the interests of children. Corresponding powers of health care authorities in the implementation the work on preventing domestic violence, regulatory guaranteeing of relevant activities are analyzed*

*in the article; perspectives of their improvement are considered. Thus, the powers include: to inform immediately the internal affairs agencies about all cases of seeking medical assistance by people with gunshot, stab wounds and other bodily injuries, if there is a reason to believe that they are received as a result of the offences and to register them in a special journal of a medical institution; to inform centers of social services for families, children and youth about families having difficulties; according to the specifics of work of the centers of social services for families, children and youth to provide medical, medical and consultative assistance; to provide consultations by medical personnel of health care authorities to the families having difficulties, etc.*

*As soon as violence in the family causes harm to human health, the Provisions of the Fundamentals of Ukrainian legislation on human health care also belong to legal acts regulating the issues of providing medical assistance to the victims of domestic violence. They define the legal, organizational, economic and social principles of health care in Ukraine regulate social relations in this area to ensure the harmonious development of the physical spiritual strength, high efficiency and long and active life of citizens, eliminating factors that adversely affect their health, preventing and reducing morbidity, disability and mortality, improving the heredity.*

*To improve medical assistance to the victims of domestic violence we should take the following steps towards improving regulatory base of this important area of public policy the authors offer: to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing domestic violence and violence against women and combating these phenomena; to bring into line national legislation of Ukraine with the provisions of this international document; to enlarge a list of subjects carrying out the work on the prevention of domestic violence with health care authorities; to elaborate and adopt a new Law "On prevention of domestic violence" under the the Council of Europe Convention on preventing domestic violence and violence against women and combating these phenomena.*

**Key words:** *violence in the family, domestic violence, center of medical and social rehabilitation, health care authorities.*

