

# Practicing What We Preach:

## Peer-Group Approach to Faculty Development in Ukrainian Medical Education

Building resilient learning communities (2020-2026)

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EUA Learning & Teaching Forum 2026 | Lisbon

# How do you transform medical education during consecutive crises?



# Adapting proven practice: from primary care to medical educators

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## **Core concept:**

Small groups of peers (equal positions) meet regularly to critically reflect on practice and learn from each other

## **Adaptation**

Medical educators (not just clinicians)

Focus: Teaching practice improvement

Key enabler: Trained facilitators

# Phase 1: Building capacity through facilitators

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## **Facilitator Training**

Content: Facilitation skills,  
group dynamics, peer group  
methodology  
Format: Online

## **Peer Groups**

6-10 medical educators  
Regular meetings  
Topics chosen by  
participants  
Facilitator guides, doesn't  
teach

## **Community Building**

Book clubs, regional  
networks, online forums  
Peer facilitators supporting  
each other

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## Challenge: Initial resistance from faculty

"Don't have time"  
"What can peers teach me?"  
Hierarchical culture barriers

# Phase 2: Crisis Adaptation (2022-2026)

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## **Synchronous online courses:**

"Teaching During War"

## **Self-paced online courses:**

"Teaching During War",  
"Moodle and Friends"  
"Medical Education System for a university teacher"  
"Course Design"  
"Teaching ,ethods and strategies"

## **New facilitator training**

using the course materials  
Supporting colleagues under extreme stress

# Phase 3: Ecosystem Expansion (2025-2026)

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**Great Teachers Seminar**  
based on Canadian model  
5-day intensive,  
30 participants per event  
peer-to-peer approach  
the agenda is built by the  
participants

“  
*“This is almost the first time  
we’re learning what truly  
matters for our practice. I love  
that we can independently  
decide which topics to discuss  
during our peer group  
meetings.”*

“  
*A therapeutic  
experience where I  
found answers to  
questions I couldn’t  
answer for long*

”  
*“*  
*We are many.*  
*”*

# Transferable principles

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Peer-driven vs Expert-driven in uncertainty

Invest in facilitators, not content

Psychological safety is foundation

Structure + Flexibility = Resilience

Community fosters competency gains

Bottom-up AND Top-down

# What we're still learning

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## **Institutional level:**

Resistance in hierarchical cultures  
Finding protected time in already overloaded schedules  
Ensuring quality across decentralized groups  
Maintaining engagement over time

## **Facilitator level:**

Facilitator burnout (especially during war)  
Need for ongoing supervision/support  
Variable facilitation quality  
Balancing structure with participant autonomy

## **System level:**

Geographic imbalance  
Sustainability after donor funding  
Scaling facilitator training without diluting quality  
Evidence of teaching improvement (not just satisfaction)



**Supervisory/mentorship**  
programs for facilitators

**Peer facilitator networks**  
(facilitators supporting  
facilitators)

**Institutional commitment**  
(not just individual enthusiasm)

**Policy recognition**  
(CPD credits legitimize  
investment)

# What we learned:



## Change is about people, not programs



<https://mededu.org.ua/>