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MU-PLEVEN CELEBRATES ITS 41TH BIRTHDAY.

MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY RECEIVE COMMEMORATIVE INSIGNIA

On 2nd November 2015, MU-Pleven celebrated the 41st anniversary of its founding. 31st October 1974 marks the establishment of a new medical faculty, part of Medical Academy, Sofia, which would later become known as Medical University – Pleven. In the University's academic calendar, the date 31st October is regarded as holiday.

The celebrations took place in "Magnum" hall. It began with the introduction of MU-Pleven's standard and emblem and continued with a celebratory speech from the Rector of the University, Prof. Slavcho Tomov:

"I believe it to be symbolic, that our university is to celebrate its birthday in the spirit of 1st November, the very day we honor those who brought enlightenment to our people. Our past mentors and tutors have bequeathed us vast knowledge and two purposes. One is to remember them and their work and to honor and respect their deeds. And second: to preserve and nurture what they and the following generations of lecturers at MU-Pleven have created...and in doing so to raise a strong generation of medical specialists and further solidify the standing and improve the reputation of MU-Pleven."

Those present honored the passing of Assoc. Prof. Desislava Stateva, who died in the terrible car crash near "Vltina", with a moment of silence.

During the celebrations, members

of the academic community received commemorative insignias in several different categories, all of which connected to the personal academic development and overall service to the University. The following members of the academic community were awarded the "Service to the University" insignia:

- Prof. Savelina Popovska, MD, PhD
- Prof. Angelina Stoianova, PhD
- Prof. Tsetsa Doichinova, MD, PhD
- Prof. Silvia Iankulovska, MD, PhD
- Assoc. Prof. Plamen Bojinov, MD, PhD

With a commemorative insignia in the field of personal academic development, fourteen members of the community were distinguished: Assoc. Prof. Nikolai Nikolov, MD; Assoc. Prof. Ljubomir Beshev, MD; Assoc. Prof. Maya Stoimenova, MD; Assoc. Prof. Vanya Tsvetkova, MD; Assoc. Prof. Lyudmil Terziev, MD; Assoc. Prof. Pavlina Nikolova, MD; Assoc. Prof. Valentina Mazneikova, MD; Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD; Assoc. Prof. Violeta Dancheva, MD; Assoc. Prof. Krum Kefadjiiski, MD; Assoc. Prof. Viktoria Georgieva, MD; Assoc. Prof. Miglena Stamboliiska, MD.

Insignia were also received by ten lecturers who had acquired their PhD titles: Desislava Petrova, MD; Nadya Kolarova, MD; Hristina Hitkova, MD;



Daniela Arabadjieva, MD; Vanya Boicheva, MD; Maya Krustanova, MD; Georgi Dimitrov, MD; Jordan Valeshkov, MD; Nikolai Yanev, MD.

The day was concluded with a celebratory concert by Pleven's Philharmonics – "A Concert of Encores", solo violin – Tchavdar Vulkov.

*Информацията предостави
В. Дукова*

BAS AND MU-PLEVEN ORGANIZED "A HUNDRED YEARS FROM WWI - PARTICIPATION AND AFTERMATH" SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

On 25th November 2015, BAS and MU-Pleven with the assistance of Municipality Pleven; Regional Academic Center; Museum of Military History,

Pleven; Regional History Museum, Pleven and the Union of Reserve Officers and Sergeants held "A Hundred Years From WWI - Participation and Aftermath" scientific conference.

The venue of the conference was the "Panorama Pleven Epic 1877" hall. The participants were welcomed by Prof. M. Sredkova, the Regional

Coordinator of National Academic Network and Assoc. Prof. Milko Asparuhov, Director of Museum of Military History, Pleven. A number of interesting lectures were held, amongst which: "Bulgaria's Participation in WWI and its Aftermath" by Acad. Georgi Markov, BAS and "Strategic Plans and Battle Outcomes of the Bulgarian Army, 1915" by Colonel Dimitar Zafirov.



For the first time in its 41-year history, MU-Pleven organized a double promotion for 113 graduates from both Medical College and the youngest department to date – the *Faculty of Health Care*. The celebration took place on 28th October in “Magnum” hall. Forty-eight graduates of Medical College took their professional oaths in their respective fields of study: “Radiologic technologist”, “Medical Laboratory Assistant” and “Social Studies”. Alongside them, sixty-five graduates from the *Faculty of Health Care*, “Nursing” and “Midwifery” fields of study also celebrated their promotion. The GPA of all classes, 2015 - Medical College amounts to grade “Very good”, 5.23 with 21 excellent marks among the graduates. *Faculty of Health Care's* GPA in “Nursing”, 2015, stands at 4.92, grade “Very good” and that of “Midwifery” – at 4.87, grade “Very good”.

The Rector of Medical University – Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov congratulated the graduates and wished them a meaningful and motivated career as true medical professionals:

“Regardless of whether you chose to work abroad or remain in Bulgaria, you will inevitably face many challenges and fierce competition. Therefore you must continue studying, working and

DOUBLE PROMOTION FOR THE GRADUATES OF THE MEDICAL COLLEGE AND THE FACULTY OF HEALTH CARE ORGANIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MU-PLEVEN

improving as professionals – that is the only road to success, no matter where you are” – said he and then added – “From this day onward, every decision you make as professionals reflects on the authority of your educators and the reputation of your alma mater.”

The graduates also received words of praise and commendation from the Director of Medical College, Assoc. Prof. Pavlina Yordanova and the Dean of the *Faculty of Health Care*, Assoc. Prof. Aleksandar Vulkov.

The valedictorian, Maria Getova, with a GPA mark of “Excellent” 6.00, congratulated her colleagues from the “Medical Laboratory Assistant” field of study and all graduates for their educational success. She took the opportunity to thank, on behalf of all classes, all educators and lecturers, whose help and continuous support proved as irreplaceable as did the faith and confidence they treated their students with. She wished luck and success to all her colleagues in their respective fields of professional development.

The ceremony was concluded by the solemn taking of the medical oath, followed by awarding the highest-GPA students with insignias and diplomas of “Excellence in Studies”.



AN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE COURSE IN PRIMARY KNEE ENDOPROSTHESIS AND REVISION OPTIONS FOR THE KNEE JOINT TOOK PLACE AT MU-PLEVEN

In October, an international practice course in primary knee endoprosthesis and revision options for the knee joint took place at MU-Pleven's *Center for Telecommunication Endoscopy* with attendants from Eastern and Central Europe. The course program included a practical session with Live Surgery. The surgical interventions were performed by Prof. Asparuh Asparuhov, MD, Dean of the *Faculty of Medicine* at MU-Pleven.





ON 4TH DECEMBER 2015, WITH A SOLEMN CEREMONY, MU-PLEVEN CELEBRATED THE PROMOTION OF ITS 36TH CLASS OF MEDICAL STUDENTS FROM THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE

On 4th December 2015 with a solemn ceremony MU-Pleven marked the promotion of its 36th class of medical students from the *Faculty of Medicine*. As is traditionally accepted, the celebrations began with the introduction of the standard and emblem of the university, followed by a celebratory procession of the graduates. The procession began at the front of the Rectorate building and was supported by extravagant cheerleading and the inspired performance of the Municipality Brass-band and its conductor - Plamen Markov. Its final destination was the city center where the students laid flowers in front of the Everlasting fire inside "St. George" chapel-mausoleum.

The ceremony later continued in "Magnum" hall. There the young physicians were greeted and congratulated by the Rector of the University, Prof. Slavcho Tomov, who reminded them of the new responsibilities they had:

"Today you set out on the steep

path of professional growth and development. Many challenges await you. There will be many difficulties you will have to face but never forget that being an alumnus of MU-Pleven is both a privilege and an obligation."

The graduates also received words of praise and commendation from both the District Head, Ralitsa Dobrova and the Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski. Special guest of this year's celebrations was the writer Georgi Mishev. Amongst the officials attending were the Honorary Rector, Prof. Grigor Gorchev and the former Vice Rector, Assoc. Prof. Nana Narlieva as well as many renowned medical specialists.

The ceremony included the awarding of the diplomas. The seventy-four graduates from Bulgaria, Macedonia and Moldova received their diplomas from the Rector, Prof. Slavcho Tomov, which marked their successful completion of their 6-year studies. With it, they obtained their academic Major's

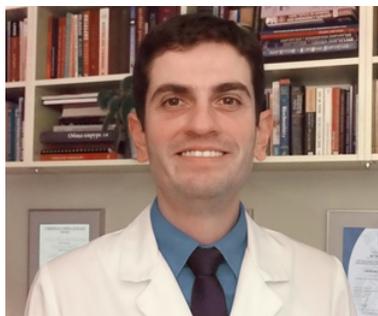
degree and professional qualification "Physician". With a GPA of 5.09, year 2015 class of medical students grades at "Very Good" with twenty-three excellent marks in total. The valedictorian, Alexander Todorov, MD, with a GPA mark of "Excellent" 5.96, famous for being the long-running student council president and the winner of the "Best Student" award congratulated his colleagues for their educational success and together with the entire class of medical students, bowed in front of the crowd of proud parents, thanking them for their continuous love and support.

Prof. Slavcho Tomov then awarded the honorable insignia for Services to the university to the long-serving lecturer and former Vice Rector in retirement, Assoc. Prof. Nana Narlieva, MD.

The celebrations were concluded by a rendition of Margarita Hranova's popular song "Ustrem" by "Gena Dimitrova" municipality choir.



TWO OF THE THREE WINNERS OF THE "YOUNG MEDIC OF THE YEAR" AWARD FOR 2015 ARE MU-PLEVEN'S ALUMNI



Dragomir Dardanov is an alumnus of MU-Pleven. He is a highly-decorated surgeon, awarded during his career with a "Mini-Nobel Prize" and a "Golden Hippocrates" for his outstanding academic achievements. His

career took him from Senior Assistant Professor in Surgery, *Medical Institute* – Ministry of Interior, *Department of Surgery*, through various prestigious surgical facilities. Today he is Consultant General surgeon at Fifth City Hospital, Sofia, while continuing his academic career as Senior Assistant Professor at the *Faculty of Medicine*, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".



Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov is a surgeon and a certified HIFU specialist for JC HIFU therapeutic system. He is an alumnus of MU-Pleven, where he continues to teach to this day. While being an Assoc. Prof. at MU-Pleven, Dobromir Dimitrov is also a surgeon at the Department of Surgical Oncology, Saint Marina Hospital-Pleven. From September, 2015 he is also

Medical Director of Saint Marina HIFU Centre. His numerous specializations took him to The Imperial College - London; Strasbourg, France; Treviso, Italy; Berlin and Bonn, Germany; Chongqing, China; Dubrovnik, Croatia.



An official ceremony which took place on 12th November 2015 in Medical University - Sofia's aula marked the end of the "Young Medic of the Year" campaign, organized by "Standard" news agency, "Darik" radio and the Ministry of Health Care. Campaign partners were Bulgarian Medical Association, Bulgarian Association of Healthcare

Professionals, "Blitz" media agency, "Doctor" newspaper, Channel 3 and K2 radio.

The ceremony was attended by many official guests: the Head of the Parliamentary Healthcare Committee, Daniela Daritkova-Prodanova, MD; the Deputy Ministers of Health and Welfare, Vanyo Sharkov, MD and Adam Persenski, MD; the Deputy Minister of Education, Nikolai Denkov; the Vice-President of BAS, Acad. Damyan Damyanov, MD; the President of BMA, Ventsislav Grozev, MD; the President of BAHF, Milka Vasileva as well as many heads of hospitals, physicians, nurses and medical specialists.

The beginning of the ceremony was marked by a speech of the Chief Editor of "Standard" newspaper, Slavka Bozukova, who presented an elaborate account of the "Young Medic" campaign progress and achievements during its run of eight months. The Deputy Minister of Health, Vanyo Sharkov, the Head of the Parliamentary Healthcare Committee, Daniela Daritkova-Prodanova and the President of BMA, Ventsislav Grozev noted the results of the campaign and applauded the award-winning physicians. The three distinguished with the "Young Medic" award physicians were: Dragomir Dardanov, MD, PhD, Consultant General Surgeon at Fifth City Hospital,

Sofia as well as Senior Assistant Professor at the *Faculty of Medicine*, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski";

Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD, PhD, Assoc. Prof. at MU-Pleven, surgeon at the Department of Surgical Oncology, Saint Marina Hospital-Pleven, Medical Director of Saint Marina HIFU Centre and Magdalena Baymakova, MD, Assist. Prof. in the *Department of Infectious Diseases*, Military Medical Academy - Sofia. According to the before-developed criteria, the three of them collected 179,72; 137,29 and 88,02 points respectively. The criteria as well as the rating system used were developed by a special committee at BMA.

Both Dragomir Dardanov, MD, PhD and Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD, PhD proved most deserving of the award and their achievements honor the best traditions of MU-Pleven. In their respective speeches they mentioned fondly their alma mater and expressed sincere gratitude towards Prof. Tashko Deliiski, MD for his support and guidance in their early years as surgeons. Both award-winning physicians will receive a one-year scholarship, most of which they have promised to donate for the betterment of MU-Pleven and "Alexandrovska" University Multi-profile Hospital for Active Treatment (UMPHAT).

Rewards and scholarships were also given to four young nurses for their outstanding performances in their respective fields. For developing hospital conditions, accommodating to young medical specialists, four hospital managers were distinguished.



Here follows extracts from an open letter to MU-Pleven's distinguished alumni by Assoc. Prof. Nana Narlieva, MD, former Vice Rector and long-serving lecturer in retirement at MU-Pleven:

"For their outstanding performance and the well-deserved "Young Medic" awards I congratulate my former students - now colleagues - Dragomir Dardanov, MD, PhD and Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD, PhD. I met Dragomir and Dobromir for the first time during their second year as medical students. From the very first moment they struck me as hard-working and diligent. During the next several years we worked together on many occasions - both in seminars and conferences and in the dissection room... After their graduation, the opportunities to work together became sporadic, yet I've always been most eager to learn

as much as possible about their successes and the challenges they faced. I was and still am proud of their drive, ambition, hard work and dedication... To them I have only this to say: Keep up the good work, boys! Treat your patients with the same flare and determination you have always kept as base of your work and follow the moral code, left to us by Hippocrates.

Dear colleagues, be well and be healthy so that you may bring health and well-being to your patients!"

THE "INTERNATIONAL DAY" INITIATIVE WAS HELD IN MU-PLEVEN FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR

On 12th November 2015, with the help of the foreign students, MU-Pleven held the third edition of the "International Day" initiative. More than 200 students from 16 countries took part in the organization process. "Nedko Kjachukov" sports hall was used to host the presentations of the young students who showcased a variety of exotic cuisine, songs and dances as well as segments dedicated to the culture, history and everyday life in their respective countries.

During the event, a competent jury of lecturers and members of MU-Pleven's governing body were tasked with the difficult job of distinguishing a "winner-country" among all the showcases. The award was based on the national cuisine, folk attires and presentations of history and culture of each respective team and their country. This clash of nationalities resulted in many tempting aromas filling the sports hall, as well as many impressive presentations of folk songs and dances. For third consecutive year, a "winner-country" was elected - last year that was Nepal, this year the winners were the students from India. The runner-up country was Pakistan, while Bulgaria snatched the third place.

The "International Day" initiative was held as a charity event. As such, it aimed at collecting funds to help children in need. With the help and guidance of the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov and the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Prof. Angelina Stoyanova, the event accumulated a total of 4 069lv from entry taxes and donations. The funds will be redirected to help rebuild and improve the rehabilitation room in the Medico-social care hospice ("Mother and Child" care home).



A SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE MARKED THE 120 ANNIVERSARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF X-RAYS



8th November, 2015 marked the anniversary of one of the greatest moments in history of science and medicine – the discovery of the X-ray. To commemorate this date, on 7th November 2015, the *Department of Roentgenology and Radiology* at MU-Pleven as well as the “Radiologic

technologist” field of study at Medical College held a scientific conference in “Balkan” hotel. The organizing committee included Prof. Nachko Totsev, MD, Head of the *Department of Roentgenology and Radiology* as well as Nina Mihailova and Silvia Gabarska – lecturers at Medical College. Amongst the official guests of the conference was the Director of Medical College, Assoc. Prof. Pavlina Yordanova-Laleva as well as many representatives of the administrative and academic staff of MU-Pleven. The forum gathered over 100 highly-qualified radiologic technology specialists from all over the country, all of whom alumni of MU-Pleven. Students of Medical



College attended with presentations on various aspects of the X-ray. A discussion was held on the topic of mistakes and incidents related to the field Roentgenology and Radiology. A viewing of movie on the topic took place as well.



AN EXPERT GROUP FROM NEAA VISITED MU-PLEVEN

In order to assess the “Radiologic technologist” field of study at MU - Pleven, which belongs to a specialized group of regulated professions, an expert group from the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA) visited the University on 23-24th November 2015. Head of the expert group was Prof. Kichka Velkova, MD, PhD. Overseeing the procedure was Prof. Tatyana Vlaykova, MD, PhD, while Chief Expert Anna Sofianska acted as coordinator. The expert group went through a series of meetings – with MU-Pleven's governing body; the Commission for Self-evaluation of the Accreditation of “Radiologic technologist” degree; students engaged in the same field of study and

lecturers engaged in teaching those students; the Medical College Committee on Quality of Education and Accreditation as well as interested employers on the job market. The experts familiarized themselves with the facilities at Medical Collage as well as those, intended for practical training at “Dr. Georgi Stranski”, “St. Panteleimon”, “St. Marina” and “Avis Medica” Hospitals for Multi-profile Treatment. The expert group visited some of the departments of MU-Pleven – the *Department of Anatomy, Histology and Cytology*; the *Department of Experimental and Clinical Pharmacology*; the *Department of Hygiene, Medical Ecology, Occupational Diseases and Disaster Medicine*. The visit from NEAA was concluded by several more meetings with MU-Pleven's governing body and the Commission for Self-evaluation of the Accreditation of “Radiologic technologist” degree.



ONE-OF-A-KIND 3D MEDICAL EQUIPMENT TESTED FOR THE FIRST TIME AT “ST. MARINA” HOSPITAL, PLEVEN

In a press-conference that took place on 13th November 2015 at the press-club of the Bulgarian News Agency, members of “St. Marina” hospital's team announced that in the time-span of seven days the hospital surgeons had performed a total of seven 3D operations with cutting-edge experimental equipment. The surgical equipment, called “Einstein”, was introduced for the first time and available only at “St. Marina” hospital



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for a trial period. During that test period, seven operations were performed, including a resection of a patient with colon cancer. Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov who is part of the team working with "Einstein" explained: "The performance of the new equipment is exceptional. The surgical interventions are highly successful and the risk for the patient – significantly reduced. One of the operations performed was on a patient with colon cancer. Only five days post-op the patient was discharged." The hospital management voiced their

intention to purchase and implement "Einstein" the following year, thus handling cases they never could before.

In severe cases when precision is often a matter of life and death, this equipment becomes vital as it is capable of magnifying organs 7-8 times and rendering them in 3D. Equipment with these specifications had never been used before anywhere in the world. The team of surgeons at "St. Marina" hospital considers it an honor to be the first in the world, chosen to test "Einstein". Prof. Grigor

Gorchev, MD, PhD, Member of correspondence at BAS, Honorary Rector of MU-Pleven and Medical Director of "St. Marina" Multi-profile Hospital stated in his address to the media that the probability was high that "St. Marina" would become a university hospital before the start of the new academic year. This would present great opportunities for medical students to improve their qualification in the field of cutting-edge medical equipment and practices.



UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - PLEVEN HAS ACQUIRED A LINEAR ACCELERATOR



On 16th December 2015 a press-conference was held on the topic of "Repair, renovation and modernization of Dr. Georgi Stranski hospital" project which was concluded late November, 2015. The press-conference focused on the results of the project, which was financed by European Regional Development Fund and the State budget, and cost an estimated 14 478 000lv. The conference was attended by the Deputy Minister of Health, Vanyo Sharkov; the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov; the Honorary Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Grigor Gorchev; the President of BMA, Ventsislav Grozev, MD; the Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski; the Deputy District Head, Krasimir Ivanov and the CEO of the University Hospital, Assoc. Prof. Tsvetan Lukanov.

The Deputy Minister of Health, Vanyo Sharkov, MD stated: "University Hospital - Pleven is now able to provide better aid and health care to its patients. This will prove beneficial not only to the citizens of Pleven but the citizens of the country in general." He also announced that the biggest project in the sphere of health care, with an estimated net

worth of over 140 million lv, will be completed successfully before Christmas, 2015. He also informed the members of the media that 2016 will mark the beginning of a new project, aiming at modernizing and improving the system and function of the Emergency Medical Care.

On 30th November 2015, University Hospital - Pleven reported the following results from the newly-installed and fully operational medical equipment:

1. Digital Ecography System - 10 459 patients examined
2. Digital Mammography System - 8 410 patients examined
3. Endoscopic Equipment - 1 760 colonoscopies and 2 497 gastroscopies
4. Video Autofluorescence Bronchoscopy System - 1 101 bronchoscopies
5. 16-slice CT Scanner - 4 628 patients examined
6. MRI equipment - 885 patients examined
7. Digital Radiography equipment - 12 755 patients examined
8. Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS)

9. Elevators (4)

10. Diesel Generator

In 2015 alone, following the project outline, several highly-specialized rooms were prepared and new equipment was installed:

11. Multimodality Linear Accelerator with Multileaf Collimation (MLC) - expected use of up to 35 patients/day
12. Intraoperative Radiotherapy (KV) equipment
13. Anaesthetic Machines (5) - expected use of 2 350 anaesthesia procedures per year
14. Automatic Autoclaves (4) - expected use of 70 units of sterilization per year

These past few years, there is notable increase in the number of cancer patients. Therefore, the newly acquired Linear Accelerator and modern, high-tech equipment are necessary to insure better hospital care and a more sophisticated approach to battling this tendency.

Procedures with the Multimodality Linear Accelerator are expected to begin in Spring, 2016.



STUDENTS FROM "MEDICINE" MASTER'S DEGREE AT MU-PLEVEN PARTICIPATE IN LONG-DISTANCE, ON-SCREEN EDUCATION

On 28th November 2015 students from "Medicine" Master's degree, MU-Pleven were able to observe three difficult operations. Through a direct visual link they could "attend" the surgical procedures, performed at First City Hospital, Sofia. The interventions were broadcasted in real time at the large screens in "Ambroise Pere" hall at MU-Pleven's rectorate. This type of long-distance, on-screen education is popular in Western Europe but is not used as often in Bulgaria.

The surgical procedures they witnessed were performed by Georgi Sybev, MD and Assoc. Prof Sergey Iliiev, MD using an experimental technique, called "Natural Orifice Endoscopic Surgery" (NOES). This type of "scarless" surgery is hailed as not only safer for patients but is also known to facilitate rapid post-op recovery.

Using this method, surgeons are not required to open the abdomen but are instead able to operate on tumor formations in the rectum or sigma directly through the anus. NOES is usually applied to benign tumors or tumors in early degenerative state. This technique is used in zones from 5-6 to 30 centimeters of the anus and is most efficient in zones in close proximity to it. Ivailo Presolski, MD, who is one of the only three certified surgeons able to perform NOES in Pleven had this to add: "In cases where the target zone is only 5-6 centimeters from the anus, traditional open surgery might result in having to surgically remove large intestinal portions in order to solve the problem."



With the new, innovative method this problem can be entirely avoided.

At this point, NOES is used in only three health centers in the country - at the *Department of Coloproctology and Purulent-septic Surgery*, Pleven; at First City Hospital, Sofia and at MMA (Military Medical Academy), Sofia.



HIGH SURVIVABILITY OF PREMATURE BABIES IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS REPORTS THE CLINIC OF NEONATOLOGY, PLEVEN

On 17th November 2015, the World Prematurity Day, the *Clinic of Neonatology*, Pleven held its annual meeting with patients. The Head of the Clinic, Assoc. Prof. Viktoria Atanasova, MD was proud to announce that the survivability rate of premature babies in the last five years has been dramatically improved. The gathered data shows, that in the 2011-2015 period 6 603 babies were born at University Hospital, Pleven with 774 of the births being premature. This amounts to a 11.7% of all births. The high survivability rate was chiefly attributed to the fact the University Hospital, Pleven is the *Republican Center for Neonatology Care* in Central Bulgaria. This concentrates most of the high-risk pregnancies from Veliko Tarnovo, Gabrovo, Lovech, etc. municipalities in the *Clinic of Neonatology*, Pleven. Viktoria Atanasova, Head of the Clinic stressed the importance of risk pregnancies being redirected to the University Hospital, Pleven for admission and controlled birth.

Assoc. Prof. V. Atanasova seized the opportunity to thank the dedicated team of medical specialists at the *Clinic of Neonatology*, Pleven for their high professionalism and the patients of the clinic for their continuous support. Assoc. Prof. Atanasova also thanked Kristina Qncheva personally for a generous donation which helped with the much-needed renovation of the Clinic.

The event continued with a feast and many games for the children, while a group of animators made sure they enjoyed themselves to the fullest.



MU-PLEVEN HOSTS A ROUND TABLE INITIATIVE ON THE TOPIC OF "PLEVEN - EUROPEAN HEALTH CENTER ON THE BALKANS"

On 26th November 2015, MU-Pleven hosted "Pleven - European health center on the Balkans" round-table conference with attendants from both the academic community and the local government. The District Head, Ralitsa Dobрева; the Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski; the Head of the Municipal Council, Pleven, Martin Mitev attended the round table with members of many governmental and non-governmental organizations and state and private medical centers. The hosts of the conference were the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov and Prof. Grigor Gorchev, Member of Correspondence at BAS.

Eight local NGOs, united in a citizen network, called "Pleven - European health center on the Balkans" had developed a framework for achieving lasting economic and social prosperity for the citizens of Pleven - city and region. The governing idea is to utilize the accumulated potential in the sphere of health care and medicine.

The Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski gave his unconditional support: "If, at present, there is anything on truly international level in Pleven, that is beyond any doubt the sphere of health care. In that

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sense, the local government is of one mind to help and support the development of Medicine in our city. This, we believe, is important for all citizens and therefore I hereby declare that Pleven's local authorities will supply institutional and any other aid or support the sphere of health care might require."

The Rector of MU-Pleven noted the key role of the University in realizing the framework and stressed the fact that further development would be impossible without the help of the local government: "The initiative is rapidly gaining momentum, has its framework and the support of all political representatives in Pleven." He also emphasized the importance of implementing the theory behind the initiative in practice.



lations and strategies for drawing in investors.

Attendants of the conference agreed that the creation of Health Care Cluster and an industrial park for high-tech medical and pharmaceutical manufacturing will bring about new workplaces. Moreover, giving young people opportunities to remain in the city will stimulate local business, hotels, restaurants, transport and entertainment.



4TH SCHOOL OF LAPAROSCOPY FOR STUDENTS ORGANIZED IN MU-PLEVEN

On 6th November 2015 at the Telecommunication Center, MU-Pleven, the 4th edition of the School of Robot-assisted Laparoscopic Surgery took place. It was organized by MU-Pleven with the help of the student-members of the Oncology Surgery Workshop, under the guidance of Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD. The School of Laparoscopy is intended for both Bulgarian and foreign medical students. Due to the growing interest in both groups, this year the event takes place on two separate dates - one in November for the Bulgarian students and one in March, 2016 for the foreign students of Medicine.

In his opening remarks, Prof. Grigor Gorchev advised the young medics to work hard on their bases in Anatomy, Open Surgery and Laparoscopic Anatomy before taking on Laparoscopic and Robotic surgery. He added: "Laparoscopic Surgery is complex and demanding, requiring quick thinking and high intelligence." He went on to congratulate Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov on organizing the event and "teaching young people the modern tendencies in Laparoscopic Surgery".



The annual event aims at training a small group of highly-motivated students with pronounced interest in the field modern Surgery. Of all the applicants, 11 students from all medical universities in Bulgaria were chosen to attend as active participants and 15 - as passive. The second part of the event aimed at foreign students will be held in March, 2016 with 10 attending students and English will be used as medium of converse.

Students attending the first part of the event were introduced to the principles and uses of Laparoscopic Surgery and the differences between Conventional and Robotic Surgery. The active participants had the opportunity to acquire basic skills in Laparoscopic Surgery by practicing with virtual box simulators.

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cont. from p.10

The event featured a number of engaging lectures by Prof. Grigor Gorchev, MD, PhD, DSc; Prof. S. Tomov, MD; Prof. T. Deliiski, MD; Assoc. Prof. N. Kolev, MD; Assoc. Prof. D. Dimitrov, MD; E. Filipov, MD; D. Tsankov, MD, Head of Surgery at "St. Marina" hospital, Pleven. Special guest-lecturer was Nikolay Belev, MD from "Eurohospital", Plovdiv.

Up until now, the School of Laparoscopy has trained 46 students, 35 of which as active participants. Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov explained: "There is definitely considerable interest in this kind of training events. Modern methods of training medical students include attending similar events early in their education and MU-Pleven is the only University in Bulgaria with the base to organize one." 



"MEDICINE" STUDENTS IN MU-PLEVEN INITIATED "MOVEMBER" CAMPAIGN

Latest data from the WHO show that during the last few years, the incidence of prostate-related diseases is rising in Europe, especially amongst men between the ages 60 and 80. Prostate cancer is the third most common type of malignancy in Bulgaria.

Concerned by the seriousness of the problem, Bulgarian Medical Student Association, BMSA are taking part in the "Movember" worldwide initiative, which aims to educate men about the risks of prostate and testicle cancer and the possible methods of prevention.

Students of the local branch of the association prepared leaflets and educational materials, which they distributed in front of "Panorama" mall, Pleven on 19-20th November 2015.

During the campaign, "UroMed" clinic, Pleven offered their clients free urological examinations. 



THE CEIIC HELD "MY ERASMUS + EXPERIENCE" CONTEST

The Center for European Integration and International Cooperation at MU-Pleven held an essay contest, titled "My Erasmus+ Experience" for the students who took part in the "Erasmus+" mobility program.

A jury at CEIIC selected the following essays as the winners of the event:

- First place: Ivaila Rasheva, student in "Medical

Rehabilitation and Ergo-therapy".

- Second place: Stanimira Elkina, student in "Paediatrics".
- Third place: Ibren Madjarova, "Medicine" student.
- Honorary Mention: Anil Temiz, "Medicine" student who presented an essay in English



TL Note:

The original essays can be found in the Bulgarian issue of Academia Medica vol.6.

Published here is the original, unedited essay by Anil Temiz.

"TODAY IS ANOTHER DAY THE PERSUADE MY DREAM"

Erasmus was my dream for almost 3 years, and I really did work a lot for it. To be honest you don't need only a good average mark or recommendation, but also very good luck.

After I arrived in Germany and continued my journey to Rostock, I didn't know that my whole Erasmus experience was going to be just the way opposite...

At the end I was very happy with the memories that I am about to share now, because I'm very happy that I was there for 3 months and I improved myself scientifically and socially in a very intense and helpful way.

I would really love to begin to tell you about my hospital experiences. It was a big part of my Erasmus, because I had to be in the hospital from 7:30 till 16:30-17:00; from Monday to Friday every week. So basically I was here all week days, from morning to evening. But I do not know how I can express my appreciation, it

won't be enough to thank all the doctors that I met there. Just one word: wonderful. I really felt myself as a doctor there, I spoke German every single day at a high level, I had to admit my own patients, examine them, draw blood, accompany them to medical procedures, write their first expressions on the time of admission. I had a big responsibility just like a doctor in Germany, and I was accepted by them as a physician too, and was respected by them as a person from a foreign country.

If I start to share all my memories from my amazing hospital days, there won't be enough pages to write. Nevertheless I would like to write one shortly.

One Friday, on the last day in Gastroenterology Department, I had a very busy day and then as a tradition I baked cookies for my

supervisor doctors. Unfortunately I realized our professor wasn't there to say goodbye. So in the evening, after I had said goodbye to everyone, I took my stuff and was about to leave the department. Just at the door when I was about to exit, our professor saw me. I explained to him how thankful I was to them, he listened me and said: "your work here was very nice, and you speak very good German ; I hope you will work with us later" That is the best thing I could ever heard from a professor.

On the other hand, it wasn't so easy to find other Erasmus students, because I was there for the summer and almost all had either already gone or had not even come in yet. But I somehow managed to meet new friends from different countries, and we cooked together, we had parties, watched movies and etc. But one of the most amazing memories was the one when we were near the city harbour. One warm evening we decided to go to the city harbour, grab wine and sing songs while one of us is played the guitar. When the night continued, we were singing and having fun even with the people who were passing by. And out of sudden one of our friends put his hat in front of us. And after 2 hours we realized that we collected 20 Euros and that made me laugh like crazy. As my last sentences, I would like to say one last thing: Dreams do not easily come true.

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