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UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL "SVETA MARINA" - PLEVEN CELEBRATED ITS HOLIDAY WITH A HOLY SANCTIFICATION

On July 17, the date when the Bulgarian Orthodox Church celebrates the Holy Martyr Marina, the Patron of Health and the celestial patron of the University Hospital "St. Marina" - Pleven, the medical institution celebrated its Orthodox holiday. In the presence of the whole team of doctors and health workers as well as many guests and partners, the priests of the Orthodox Church "St. Paraskeva" - Pleven served a solemn rite in the Medical Center for Diagnostics.

The celebration was the perfect occasion to do a short review of the achieved successes and results for the three dynamic years of development and affirmation of "Sveta Marina" Hospital - Pleven. On July 17, 2015, "Sveta Marina" - Pleven was officially opened as a unique, high-tech, "smart" hospital. Nowadays the medical establishment welcomes the holiday with an entirely new status - from October 4, 2017, with a decision of the Government, "Sveta Marina" - Pleven acquired the status of a university hospital. This means a qualitatively new, higher level of training and research for students, postgraduates and specialization students. Today, a total of 30 young doctoral students, postgraduates and Assistant Professors work at the departments of the hospital. The high-tech base attracts a large flow of

Bulgarian and foreign students for pre-graduate and post-graduate training as well as for traineeships and specializations.

The management and the team of health professionals at "St. Marina" - Pleven are constantly working towards building and strengthening the high-tech profile of the medical establishment as a leader in the provision of high-quality health care services that the patients truly deserve. One of the brightest examples of a huge investment in state-of-the-art equipment over the past year is the PET scanner for diagnosis of oncologic diseases. It is the only one in Northern Bulgaria and the fifth in the country after the ones already operating in the cities of Sofia, Varna and Panagyurishte. The high-tech acquisition, which has attracted over 760 patients over a period of 10 months, has been successfully installed and is functioning at full capacity at the Medical Center for Diagnostics at "Sveta Marina" - Pleven.

Official guests of the celebration were the Rector and members of the



Academic Leadership of the Medical University - Pleven; Dr. Penka Stefanova - Director of the Regional Health Insurance Fund - Pleven; Desislava Pantaleeva - Deputy Director of the Regional Health Insurance Fund - Pleven and Dr. Vania Ivanova - Director of the Medical Activities Directorate at the Regional Health Inspection - Pleven. A greeting was delivered by Dr. Petar Keremedchiev, Executive Director of "St. Marina" University Hospital - Pleven. He praised the efforts and professional work of his colleagues, and commented on the thousands of satisfied patients from the quality health services provided by the hospital.



BLOODLESS REMOVAL OF KIDNEY STONES THROUGH THE USE OF LASER TECHNOLOGY IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL "ST. MARINA" - PLEVEN

University Hospital "Sveta Marina" - Pleven enriched its material base while simultaneously defending its high-tech profile by introducing a new system for bloodless surgery. This time the innovative solution is in the field of urology - the introduction of the most modern treatment for patients with renal stone disease. The Urology Department now has a state-of-the-art, high-tech apparatus for laser lithotripsy or the bloodless breakdown of stones in the kidney, ureter and bladder. The innovative and very effective method has already been successfully applied to practice on the first patients of the leading specialists in Urology - Dr. Georgi Gavrilov, Dr. Georgi Atanasov and Dr. Nikolay Nikolov. The applications for planned surgical intervention are performed after prior consultation and selection of patients.

The state-of-the-art apparatus for treating kidney stone disease is unique in the region and is possible to be used for all types of urinary tract stones, including larger ones. This is the competitive advantage of laser lithotripsy over other methods of removing calculi, such as ultrasound and pneumotropic lithotripsy, experts say. With the minimally invasive laser intervention, the stone is reached under constant visual control, it is crushed by laser energy and the smaller fragments are removed with a special method.

The advantages of laser therapy of renal stone disease are numerous - the intervention is minimally invasive, short and painless and takes place through the natural openings of the body without additional incisions, with the simultaneous removal of even the smallest particles left after the stones are crushed. The condition of the patients is immediately relieved, they recovery time is quick and the hospital stay is minimal.

The specialists from the team of the Urology Department



of "St. Marina" - Pleven, after consultation and careful examination, offer an individualized approach to each patient with the choice of optimal therapy or a combination of therapeutic approaches: laser therapy, high intensity focused ultrasound - HIFU therapy, laparoscopic "bloodless" surgery, as well as radical surgery of all types of oncological diseases of the genitourinary system.



FIRST VISIT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY OF EUROPEAN ROBOTIC GYNCOLOGICAL SURGERY OF THE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY – PLEVEN, IN CONNECTION TO THE HOSTING OF THE EUROPEAN ROBOTICS FORUM IN BULGARIA

In the period 16-18 July 2018 for the first time in history, the President of the Society of European Robotic Gynecological Surgery (SERGS), Prof. Rene Verheyen from France and several Council members visited the Medical University - Pleven (MU-Pleven) and Sofia. The purpose of the visit was to choose the location for the 11th Annual Congress of the European Association of Robotics in 2019, hosted by the Medical University - Pleven. The motto of the European Forum will be "Knowledge and Innovation to Leap beyond the Boundaries".



Prof. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of MU-Pleven, second-term Member of the Council of the Society of European Robotic Gynecological Surgery, welcomed his colleagues at the University. He introduced them to the modern material base of the Telecommunication Endoscopic Center and demonstrated the high-tech solutions for the training of Bulgarian and international students - 3D Live Streaming Surgery Studio, 3D Medical Table for Virtual Dissections for precise pre-op training, Virtual Room with the latest generation simulators and an experimental operating room for training on living tissues. The European guests also went to the Museum of Minimally Invasive Surgery, where they could see the first miniaturization of the robotic surgical system Da Vinci Si, the HIFU apparatus miniature and over 40 instruments and apparatus related to the history of minimally invasive surgery.

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The main aim of the President and the members of the Council of the Society of European Robotic Gynecological Surgery (SERGS) was to determine the location for the European Congress in Sofia. The forum will be organized by the Medical University of Pleven and the venue will be the oldest Alma Mater in Bulgaria - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The event will take place on 12-14 September 2019. The decision was taken after a tour of several locations, conducting several meetings, including a meeting with the Sofia University Management.

At the 10th Anniversary of SERGS in September 2018 in Milan, Italy, the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov will present the host location of the 11th Annual Congress of the European Association of Robotics in 2019 in Sofia as well as the Scientific Committee and the schedule of the Forum.



MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

The highest decision-making body of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Health Assembly (WHA), gathered member states and non-governmental organizations once again in the capital of global health, Geneva, Switzerland. International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) is in official relations with WHO since 1969. As a Non-State Actor, our Federation is invited to send a delegation of youth to the 71st WHA. IFMSA brought together 56 enthusiastic students from 32 different countries of all Regions, studying various healthcare professions such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary, chiropractic, and working diligently for global health!

Over the course of 6th Pre-WHA workshop, youth delegation to the 71st WHA met with 41 inspirational speakers from civil society groups to high level UN officers, learnt more about global health issues at stake, and practiced their advocacy skills. IFMSA delegation is divided into 4 streams to specifically focus on noncommunicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, universal health coverage, and ending discrimination in healthcare. During the WHA, each stream presented commitments and calls of IFMSA, lobbied government delegations and officials for more ambitious actions, and delivered statements on relevant agenda items.

Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria (AMSB-Bulgaria) organized a campaign to raise awareness about mental health among medical students and society. We conducted surveys about stigmatization related to mental disorders nationwide and prepared a brief report. During the WHA, Dr. Simeonova from the governmental delegation of the Republic of Bulgaria appreciated the calls of AMSB – Bulgaria to improve the national policies for mental health and welcomed future collaborations!



If you are enthusiastic about global health and can't wait to take your current work to the global level, student delegation to the WHA is your chance! Every year, IFMSA announces the call for applications on its webpage <https://ifmsa.org>. Student delegation to the WHA is a great means of actualizing meaningful youth participation. As youth, we are one of the biggest demographics on earth and an important agent for positive change in the world. Our contribution is crucial because we will be working and living in the environments shaped by policies made today. I am grateful to Medical University - Pleven for the guidance and financial support during delegation!

Ayilkin Celik; 3rd Year Medicine Student

THE CHILDREN CLINIC AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL PLEVEN RECEIVED A DONATION

For yet another year, the Pediatrics Clinic at the University Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" - Pleven received a donation from the chairwoman of the Association "Humanitarian Aid from Epie", Janet Buryo. Various medical consumables and articles were provided free of charge to the clinic. The head of the Department of Child Diseases, Prof. Vanya Nedkova and all the staff of the clinic welcomed the representatives of the NGO. Prof. Nedkova and Mrs. Ivaila Petkova, nurse general, thanked the donors on behalf of the management of the hospital.

Janet Buryo was also thankful for the welcoming reception and once again declared her strong attachment to the Children's Clinic in Pleven and the city itself.



ANALYTICAL STATISTICS RESULTS REVEAL A TROUBLING TREND IN PLEVEN MUNICIPALITY

An alarming trend has been the low birth rate in the Pleven region in recent years. Every year, the number of live-born children in the area is decreasing. In 2017, according to the data of the Territorial Statistical Offices (RSB), 2125 births were registered in the Pleven region, of which 2112 (99.4%) were live-born, while in the previous year (2016) there were 70 or 3.2% more.

The number of live-born boys in 2017 (1,089) is higher than that of girls (1,023), in other words for every 1,000 live-born boys there are 939 girls.

One of the main and most important indicators,

determining the demographic situation in a particular area, is the total fertility rate or the average number of live births per woman. In Pleven, in 2017 it was 1.79 and in 2016 it was 1.8.

The number of women at a fertile age (aged 15-49) and their fertility have a significant impact on the birth rate and determine the reproduction pattern of the population. Due to the emigration process, especially among young people, the potential maternity contingent in the country is constantly decreasing.



STUDEN CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN FOR THE BULGARIAN STUDENTS, 2018

Once again, during the Student Candidate Campaign (2018), Medical University - Pleven managed to hold the interest of the prospective students, although the number of high-school graduates, according to official data, is decreasing this year by a rough total of 4,000 compared to the previous one.

By a decision of the Council of Ministers, № 341 / 21.05.2018, the total number of students admitted for training at the higher schools of education for the academic year 2018-2019 has been approved. This year, at the Medical University of Pleven, the admissions of students under state grants for the different specialties is as follows: "Medicine" (120) and "Pharmacy" (60), "Nursing" (70), "Assistant pharmacist" (21) 'Medical rehabilitation and ergotherapy' (40) and 'Medical



cosmetics' (15). During the forthcoming school year, Medical University Pleven will offer training for 513 freshmen students in 14 specialties, 4 master and 10 bachelor programs in 5 professional fields - "Medicine", "Pharmacy", "Health Care", "Public Health" and " Social activities".

For the 180 places available in the two most popular specialties, Medicine and Pharmacy, a total of 813 candidate

students applied, making it an average of 5 candidates aiming for one place.

The total number of students who wished to take part in the exams for the Master's and Bachelor's degree programs at MU-Pleven was 1,111. There were 82 students who took part in the rankings with only their grades from the preliminary exam.

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The exams began with the Biology examination for the specialties "Medicine" and "Pharmacy". It was held on July 3, 2018, Tuesday, from 9.00 am to 1 pm, at 29 halls in the Rectorate building, the Faculty of Pharmacy and the Medical College building, with the participation of 110 Quaestors - lecturers and university staff who took care of the normal proceedings of the exam.

The second exam for Chemistry for both Master's specialties of "Medicine" and "Pharmacy" was held on July 10, Tuesday, also lasting 4 hours. - from 9:00 to 13:00 in the educational halls of the Rectorate and the Medical College building. A total of 707 candidate students attended the exam.

On 20.07.2018 the registration of the newly admitted first-year students in the Master's specialties at MU-Pleven - "Medicine" and "Pharmacy" was completed. More than half of the spots for both Major degrees were filled. At the end of the day the secondary rankings of the candidates for these specialties came out. There were 7 candidates with a maximum score (36) for both Medicine and Pharmacy, of which 2 boys and 5 girls.



THE NEW ITERATION HIP JOINT PROSTHETICS WAS SUCCESSFULLY SURGICALLY APPLIED BY THE TEAM AT DR. GEORGI STRANSKI HOSPITAL

A team from the Clinic of Orthopedics and Traumatology at "Dr. Georgi Stranski" University Hospital in Pleven performed a complicated 4-hour operation that saved the leg of a 50-year-old patient from Vratsa. The surgical intervention, which was completed by the Head of the Clinic Prof. Dr. Vihara Kovachev, PhD, orthopedists Dr. Mancho Kovachev and Dr. Hristo Gigov and the anesthesiologist Dr. Stefanovski, was being performed for the first time in Pleven. During the operation, a new generation of modular hip prosthesis of Valdemar-Link was implanted, which is applied only in the so-called revisional and tumor surgery, where it is necessary to remove (resection) the affected areas of severe inflammatory processes. With the help of the new hip prosthesis, the bone deficiency is compensated and as a result - the length and the resistance of the patient's limb are restored. Prof. Kovachev commented on the case and explained the technology of the intervention. Approximately a year ago, the man broke his hip in the proximity of his thigh, followed by

surgery, but later he broke the structure, which lead to inability to heal, bone formation at atypical sites, and aseptic necrosis of the femoral head. As a consequence of all this, a defect was formed - pseudarthrosis of the thigh. The patient's foot became unusable due to impaired thigh integrity, severe deformity and shortening of the limb. The patient could not move alone or without aid and felt constant pain. After several unsuccessful attempts to recover, a decision was made to apply the new generation modular prosthesis of Valdemar Link. "We had to trim more than half of the hip bone, remove the adhesions of the bone, restore the bone and the femur and reinstall the muscles in their normal places," Prof. Kovachev explains. "This is a serious operation that is being done for the first time in Pleven, I have no information whether it is implemented elsewhere in Bulgaria, but if it has been, it is but a few times". The new hip bone prosthetics allows for accurate reconstruction of the biomechanical parameters through precise intraoperative assessment, resulting in a complete restoration of the length and stability of the limb. After the surgery, the patient feels good and is extremely pleased and grateful.



AT THE FIRST SCIENTIFIC FORUM ON INTERVENTION TECHNOLOGIES IN EGYPT, THE TEAM FROM BULGARIA SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCE IN NON-INVASIVE ULTRASOUND SURGERY



The first scientific forum on Interventional Technologies, organized by the International Society for Minimal Invasive and Non-Invasive Medicine, took place on 4 August in Cairo, Egypt. One of the

invited lecturers at the international conference was Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dobromir Dimitrov, Head of HIFU Center "Sveta Marina" - Pleven and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at MU-Pleven. Associate Professor Dimitrov is a member of the Management Board of the Society for Minimal Invasive and Non-Invasive Medicine. He was invited to present a scientific analysis of the results of the 5-year experience of the only fully-operational center for non-invasive medicine in Southeast Europe at the University Hospital "Sveta Marina" - Pleven. Since December 2012, over 500 patients have been treated with non-invasive HIFU technology. The greatest interest in the audience caused the clinical results in patients with breast fibroids and pancreatic cancer treated in Pleven through HIFU surgery.

Associate Professor Dimitrov joined as a lecturer of the 25 young doctors from 7 countries participating in the international training course on non-invasive ultrasound therapy in Egypt. He presented the clinical protocol and the selection of patients with pancreatic cancer for treatment with HIFU.

150 surgeons, oncologists, radiologists and medical professionals from around the world participated in the First Interventional Science Forum in Cairo, Egypt. The purpose of the international conference was to present highly innovative interventional solutions for the treatment of benign and malignant tumors. Various ablation procedures, interventions, diagnostic and curative approaches with minimal trauma inflicted on the patients such as radio frequency ablation, HIFU, endoscopic stereotyping, stereotaxic (imaging) biopsies, and more were demonstrated in the reports.



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