

12TH SEPTEMBER 2016 MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR AT MU-PLEVEN. THE CELEBRATORY CEREMONY FOR THE START OF THE 42ND ACADEMIC YEAR AT THE UNIVERSITY WAS HELD AT "MAGNUM" HALL

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MS. TSETSKA TSACHEVA, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BULGARIA WAS AWARDED A HONORARY INSIGNIA BY THE UNIVERSITY

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THE START OF THE NEW ACADEMIC YEAR AT MU-PLEVEN

12th September 2016 marks the beginning of the new academic year at MU-Pleven. The celebratory ceremony for the start of the 42nd academic year at the university was held at "Magnum" hall with many official guests attending, including: Ms. Tsetska Tsacheva, Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Bulgaria; Prof. Grigor Gorchev, Honorary Rector of MU-Pleven; Mr. Vladislav Nikolov, MP; Ms. Ralitzza Dobрева, Governor of Pleven Municipality; Mr. Stefan Milev, Deputy Mayor of Pleven.

The first-year students were welcomed in a solemn manner with the "Gaudeamus" - the hymn of the academic community. Vocal accompaniment was provided by the Municipality Choir "Gena Dimitrova", conducted by Ms. Anelia Decheva. Prof. Margarita Alexandrova, Vice-Rector of Education was tasked with explaining the structure of the university to the freshmen.

Prof. Alexandrova's address was followed by the address of the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Slavcho Tomov. In his typical, soft-spoken manner, Prof. Tomov congratulated the first-year students and their families on their acceptance while also drawing focus on MU-Pleven's achievements and goals:

"Today is a historic day for our university for it marks the first time in its history to accept freshmen in the 'Pharmacy' field of study. We have, in the past few years, achieved and maintained an image for innovation, quality and success both locally and internationally. We are the leading pioneers in Robotic Surgery. Our Telecommunication Center continues to develop and promote Long-

distance, on-Screen education and medicine and will, this year, introduce a new 3D education studio. The highly-advanced educational portal - surgical table for virtual dissections - is also available and fully operational."

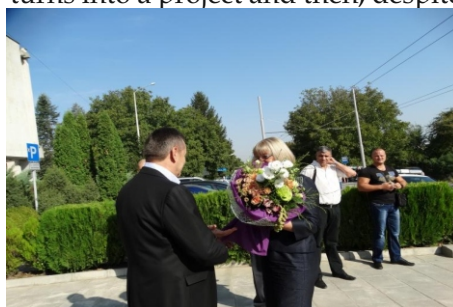
Prof. Tomov went on to reassure the first-year students of their correct choice of joining the bustling academic community of MU-Pleven, while also stressing how much of a success the new Pharmacy specialty really is and how difficult a path it had been that had led to achieving said success. He also unveiled the name of the new Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy - Prof. Toni Vekov. Prof. Tomov then used the opportunity to thank Ms. Tsetska Tsacheva, Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Bulgaria personally and in the name of the whole academic community at MU-Pleven for her outstanding contribution and unwavering support of the project for the new Faculty of Pharmacy. In respect of her help and dedication in the agenda of furthering educational prospects of pharmaceutical education in Bulgaria, Ms. Tsetska Tsacheva was awarded by a honorary insignia from the university.

Ms. Tsacheva admitted to have been deeply touched by the honor and gratitude of the whole academic community at MU-Pleven and further added that: "There is always a single person behind a good idea at first but as time passes more and more people become engaged until it turns into a project and then, despite



the naysayers, into glorious reality. However, in order to achieve any success you'd need to be stubborn, dedicated, to reach out not only to the academic but to the political community, the local government, the businesses. When you do all that hard work, things start to unfold in your favor." Ms. Tsacheva also stressed strongly that it had not been a light or short road to success: "A lot of time has passed since that first idea. Three General Assemblies came and went with all the changes in Ministries and Local Governments that change always entails. The number of people that were engaged into make this one idea into reality is truly extraordinary."

In her address to the students and the academic community of MU-Pleven, Ms. Tsacheva, who was born in Pleven, noted that with every visit she made to the university she felt a "sense of freedom" because Pleven is historically where "the fight for freedom truly began". She also added that: "Our city is only alive when it embraces the drive, enthusiasm and intellectual freedom of the young. It is only then that it has a present and a promise for a successful future."



MEDICAL UNIVERSITY – PLEVEN ORGANIZED AND HOSTED THE EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT - 2016



This year, the event took place on September 30th and MU-Pleven hosted the local edition. The theme of the event was: "Food - a history, a symbol, a medicine - focus on beans and bean foods" as part of the FRESH (Find Researchers Everywhere and Share) project. MU-Pleven partnered with VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", the local branch of USB (Union of Scientists in Bulgaria) and the Regional History Museum - Pleven.

The European Researchers' Night is a mega event, sponsored by the European Commission for Research and Innovation "Marie Skłodowska-Curie". Eleven major Bulgarian cities took part in the event as part of the "Horizon 2020" program. This Europe-wide public event is dedicated to popular science and fun learning.

The event began in late afternoon at the Regional History Museum – Pleven with a short address from Prof. Savelina Popovska, Vice-Rector of European Integration and International Cooperation who introduced the guests to the event, its goals and the program. Notable among the hosts and guests of the event were: Georg Spartanski, Mayor of Pleven; Prof. Atanas Kirilov, Chair of the local branch of USB; Dr. Volodya Popov, PhD, Director of the Regional



History Museum – Pleven.

Main part of the event took place in three phases:

- Phase 1 (17:00-18:00) - Regional History Museum - theme: "Regional Agricultural History":

Part 1 of the event included an exhibition titled "Agriculture and Crops of the Old World and Antiquity" presented and hosted by Prof. Atanas Kirilov, Chair of the local branch of USB. He pointed out that the idea behind the exhibition was to introduce the guests to details of the food and its preparation from Prehistoric times until Antiquity. He further added that: "Those are far remote times, yet people back then were organized in growing, preserving and preparing food as well as the relevant crafts and trades." The exhibit offered a panoramic view and was the first of its kind to be constructed as part of the event.

- Phase 2 (18:00-20:15) - "Ambroise Pare" hall, MU - theme: "Beans and Bean Foods: A Forgotten yet Useful Tradition."

As part of the second Phase of the event, Prof. Atanas Kirilov introduced the guests to a presentation titled: "Bean Cultures and the Year of Bean Cultures at the UN" as part of which he discussed the reasons UN had behind naming 2016 the year of bean



cultures.

Sen. Assist. Prof. Vanya Birdanova, MD, PhD also introduced a presentation themed: "Beans and Their Role in a Healthy Lifestyle and Clean Nature."

- Phase 3 (20:15-23:00) - "Ambroise Pare" hall, MU - theme: "Symbols of Sacred Food."

Assoc. Prof. Svilen Tutekov, Theology and Philosophy Major at VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" explained to the guests the meaning behind the sacred food. In his presentation he offered a different viewpoint on food as part of Christianity and as means of not only sustaining life but also sanctifying it.

A quiz marked the end part of the event with Assoc. Prof. Teodora Valeva at the helm and with the help of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria and students from several high-schools and MU-Pleven. Focus of the quiz was the influence of technology on contemporary eating habits and the lack of attention modern society pays to healthy cooking and dieting. Vouchers for free examination with *Tanita* electronic scales were given out as prizes for the quiz winners.

A short cocktail party marked the closing of the European Researcher's Night in Pleven.



THE FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FACULTY OF PHARMACY WAS HELD AT MU-PLEVEN. THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE FACULTY WAS CHOSEN

As per the instruction of the Academic Council of MU-Pleven, on 12th October 2016 in "Asclepius" hall, the Faculty of Pharmacy held its General Assembly in order to determine its Governing Body. As stipulated in the Law for Higher Education, the Governing Body includes the General Assembly, the Faculty Council and the Dean. Prof. Dr. Tony Venkov was elected as Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy; Assoc. Prof. Galya Stavreva was elected Chair of the General Assembly and Prof. Angelina Stoyanova was elected Deputy Chair of the General Assembly.



MEETING THEMED "PROPHYLAXIS OF GYNECOLOGICAL DISEASES" WAS HELD IN THE TOWN OF DOLNI DABNIK

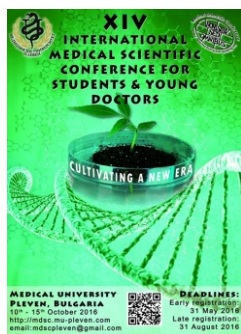


On 6th October 2016, a meeting on the topic of "Prophylaxis of Gynecological Diseases" was held in Dolni Dabnik. The idea was put forward by Daniela Gonkova, Head of Women of GERB-Pleven club and part of the "Women and Health" municipality campaign. Guest lecturer of the event was Dobrinka Gincheva, MD, AG at KIRM - Pleven. She explained to the guests of the event the chief causes of the different types of gynecological diseases, their control, management and treatment. She emphasized the importance of timely prophylaxis and regular examinations. She added that even in the absence of any gynecological problems, women should visit their AG at least once every year. The event format was conversation and discussion and guest had many of their questions answered with focus laid on individual cases as well as broad observations.



THE XIV INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG DOCTORS WAS HELD AT MU-PLEVEN

Event program included many presentations from world-renowned scientists



From the 10th until the 15th October 2016 - in a five-day format - MU-Pleven hosted the XIV

International Scientific Conference for Students and Young Doctors. The event, titled "Cultivating a New Era" included various interesting initiatives, focusing on the latest achievements in medicine as well as innovative approaches to medical education, science, and practices. A record number of medical students and young physicians from around the world attended the conference - more than 300 young people from Bulgaria, China, Russia, Ukraine, Ireland, Slovenia, Turkey and Poland.

The conference officially started on 10th October 2016 at the Telecommunication Center, MU-Pleven. In his address to the participants

of the conference, Prof. Slavcho Tomov had this to say: "This scientific conference has turned into one of the most important events organized at MU-Pleven. It is a gathering of enquiring minds and a testament of the bustling potential of our students... We are proud to always welcome world-renowned scientists to our forum."

The conference-proper was preceded by "Autumn School for Innovation in the Field of Medicine". Among the various discussions and lectures:

- "Problems with elderly patients with congenital heart disease." Moderator of the event: Prof. Dr. Tsvetomir Lukanov, Head of the Department of Children Cardio Surgery, University Hospital "Heidelberg" - Germany.

- "Translational Medicine - General Concepts, Approaches and Methods." Moderators of the event: Prof. Dr. Amid Shahzad, President of EUSTM



and Prof. Gottfried Koehler, ASTM.

- Seminar: "High-tech medicine and the experience of MU-Pleven", including demonstration in realistic conditions on the 3D medical table for virtual dissections, which allows for research of all kinds of medical images of pre-clinic and clinical practice through the automatic generation of 3D and the dimensional detailing of an object. There was also a viewing of life 3D Surgery.

- Work meeting: "Laparoscopic

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Methods in Surgery, Midwifery and Gynecology." During the meeting, the young scientists will work in small teams with a moderator and a nurse, improving their laparoscopic skills in the box and virtual simulator. The work meeting will be moderated by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dobromir Dimitrov, MD and Dr. Lachezar Tanchev, MD.

The conference-proper program on 13th and 14th October 2016 included lectures and demonstrations of renowned medical specialists from Bulgaria and abroad, some of whom:

- Prof. Dr. Dimitar Gospodinov, MD, PhD, Head of Sector "Dermatology and Venereology", MU-Pleven, Member of the governing body of Bulgarian Dermatological Society.

- Prof. Dr. Kypros Nicolaides, Head of Fetal Medicine Center at King's College Hospital, London.

Prof. Nicolaides demonstrated Fetal Surgery, the entire process of which was

broadcasted live in the conference rooms at MU-Pleven. The demonstration surgery proved extremely popular among the attendees, prompting serious discussions.

- Dr. Petya Chaveeva, MD, Certified specialist in Fetal Medicine under Prof. Nicolaides, also the first to locally perform an intrauterine operation in a case of fetal diaphragm hernia. Dr. Chaveeva took part in the lively discussion on the demonstration live surgery performed by Dr. Nicolaides.

- Dr. Kenichiro Hasumi, MD, Founder of Hasumi International Research Foundation. Dr. Kenichiro Hasumi is a physician, specializing in cancer immunotherapy and terminal care. He is also a researcher and visionary, focused on the development of cancer vaccines and improved clinical treatments to achieve better

patient outcomes with a higher quality of life. Dr. Hasumi has a Degree Honoris Causa at MU-Pleven and participated with a lecture, themed: "New Approach to Inhibiting CTL Immune Tolerance after Induction Treatment with HITV."

- Prof. Dr. Deen Man, Pathology Department, University of Maryland and Prof. Dr. Milcho Minchev, National Specialized Hospital for Active Treatment of Hematologic Diseases, Sofia took part in a scientific discussion, focusing on "Immunology and Cancer."

- Dr. Ronald Harvey, Fulbright scholarship student, DePol University, Chicago, USA. Attended with a lecture, titled: "The Role of Social Aid and Accommodation in Maintaining Sobriety after Treatment Amongst the Addicted to Drugs and Alcohol."



FETAL MEDICINE PIONEER IN BULGARIA WAS GUEST AND MODERATOR AT THE XIV INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE FOR STUDENTS AND YOUNG DOCTORS



UK. In 2012 she acquired a degree in fetal medicine with expertise in the following areas: screening tests for numerical chromosomal abnormalities, fetal morphology, tracking risk pregnancies, Doppler assessment of fetal condition and testing for cervical insufficiency. Acquires a certificate of competence in fetal echocardiography from Professor Lindsay Allen. In

2014 and 2015 Dr. Chaveeva applied in Medical Clinic "Dr. Shterev" - for the first time in Bulgaria - three innovative surgical techniques for babies still in the womb - fetal laser surgery to treat transfusion syndrome, intrauterine transfusion and minimal invasive surgery of congenital diaphragmatic hernia.

Currently, Dr. Chaveeva is an international lecturer visiting and participating in authoritative international scientific conferences in the field of fetal medicine, minimally invasive prenatal diagnostics and fetal surgery.

While participating and moderating the event at MU-Pleven, Dr. Chaveeva had this say: "MU-Pleven has always been a trailblazing university, which

has set the standard in many fields of medicine. Therefore I hope fetal surgery will take its first steps as a new branch of Obstetrics and Gynecology right here, at MU-Pleven."

Concerning fetal surgery, Dr. Chaveeva elaborated: "There are conditions in which, if the corrective procedure is not carried out within the womb, the chance for the fetus to survive is below the 10 percentile." She went on to explain that such conditions are generally rare. An example would be Twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome (TTTS), which - if not treated by the 25th-26th week - carries a 90% chance of resulting in losing one or both twins. Dr. Chaveeva is convinced that fetal surgery improves dramatically the chance of survival of unborn patients in similar cases but she acknowledges that it is not a miracle cure and the success rate can never be a 100%. "Surgeons involved in fetal surgery know that when the time comes to perform an operation, it is do or die - you either perform or lose the fetus. A surgeon is always prepared to operate. The tricky and difficult part is to know when to operate. That requires rigorous training, experience and a great team to back you up."



THE MEDICAL COLLEGE AT MU-PLEVEN HELD ITS 14th NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

On 6th-7th October 2016, the Medical College at MU-Pleven held its 14th National Scientific Conference for students and lecturers. The thematic fields included: "Medical Diagnostic Investigations", "Social Activities", "Prevention and Public Health". Honorable guest of the event: Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, MD, Rector of MU-Pleven.

The forum began with an official address from the guest of honor, Prof. Slavcho Tomov, MD, PhD, Rector of MU-Pleven. To the people gathered at "Ambroise Pare" hall, Prof. Tomov noted that: "This forum is a firm

affirmation of the important role colleges play in the sphere of higher education. Despite the circulating ideas that medical colleges should be reformed into centers for professional education and thus removed from the field of higher education, I firmly believe and am convinced their place is right here, beside us, beside universities." He further added that: "Colleges are one of the few completely autonomous institutions that work on a profit, generating positive annual revenue, which does not seem to stand right with some governmental cliques." Prof.



Tomov is convinced medical colleges should remain part of Bulgaria's higher education system.

A total of 105 students and lecturers took part in

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this year's scientific conference. The forum was also attended by members of other academic communities: MU-Sofia; "Yordanka Filaretova" Medical College, MU-Varna; Medical College at MU-Plovdiv; Medical College at Trakia (Thrace) University – Stara Zagora; Veliko Tarnovo University, etc.

During the 2 days (6th and 7th), the audience and attendees had the opportunity to listen to and discuss a total of 49 reports and 2 plenary reports,



divided into 4 different sections: "Medical Diagnostic Investigations", "Social Activities", "Prevention and Public Health" as well as "Various".

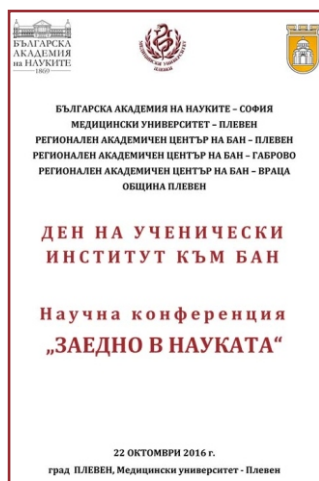


MU-PLEVEN TOGETHER WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' INSTITUTE AT THE BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES HOSTED "TOGETHER IN SCIENCE" SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

On 22nd October 2016, MU-Pleven hosted an initiative, put forward by the Students' Institute at BAS for a scientific conference called "Together in Science". The Student's Institute first started operating in 2014 as part of BAS broad structure. Its aim and function is to provide an opportunity for students, grades 8-12, to acquire experience in a field of science of their choosing. Under the guidance and tutelage of a teacher, lecturer or a scientist every member of the Institute works on and develops a project, later presented in written form. The authors of the best projects receive invitations to present their topic in front of other scientist at scientific session, organized by BAS.

The initiative, put forward by the Students' Institute at BAS for a scientific conference called "Together in Science" was organized by the regional academic centers of BAS – Pleven; Gabrovo and Vratsa, along with Pleven Municipality and MU-Pleven. The event's focus audience and participants were the Headmasters, teachers and students of leading High Schools in the cities of Pleven, Vratsa and Grabrovo. The event was held at the Telecommunication Center, "Ambroise Pare" hall.

Notable participants in the event were: Prof. Maria Sredkova, coordinator and host of the event; Prof. Dimitar Dimitrov, Memb. of Corresp. at BAS; Prof. Slavcho Tomov, MD, PhD, Rector of MU-Pleven; scientists at BAS; lecturers from TU – Gabrovo; students from renowned schools in Pleven, Vratsa and Gabrovo.



19TH OCTOBER 2016

INTERNATIONAL ETHICS DAY AT MU-PLEVEN



On 19th October 2016, MU-Pleven took part in the "International Ethics Day" initiative. The formal organizer of the event - Carnegie Council - supports academic institutions in organizing lectures, debates, movie screenings and viewings - all of which connected in some way to the field of Ethics. Carnegie Council allows every institution the freedom to celebrate and organize the event in a way they chose, while still providing an opportunity for them to officially register as participant of the event on their website.

Tapping into that resource, MU-Pleven has now established a tradition of celebrating Bioethics Day in its own, unique way, every year at the start of April. The event at MU-Pleven was organized and coordinated by the Dean of the Department of Public Health, Prof. Silvia Yankulovska. This year, the focus was on the bioethical problems facing the medical practice.

The event was divided into two segments:

Segment 1: Ethics Competition (only for 2nd year medical students)

Part 1: Quiz

Part 2: Practical problem-solving

1st prize: Recognition of semestrial Medical Ethics examination with excellent marks for all members of the team.

Segment 2: Ethics Movies Evening

Movies featured:

- "The Doctor" (1991) Stars: William Hurt, Christine Lahti, Elizabeth Perkins
- "You don't know Jack" (2010) Stars: Al Pacino, Brenda Vaccaro, John Goodman

+Information: Assist. Prof. Atanas Anov





PROF. DR. SLAVCHO TOMOV: MEDICAL EDUCATION IN BULGARIA IS ON A VERY HIGH LEVEL BUT IT REQUIRES EFFORT AND INVESTMENTS

Interviewer: Lora Tarkoleva

Interviewer: Until tomorrow, 15th October 2016 - in a five-day format - MU-Pleven hosts the XIV International Scientific Conference for Students and Young Doctors. The event, titled "Cultivating a New Era" includes various interesting initiatives, focusing on the latest achievements in medicine as well as innovative approaches to medical education, science, and practices. A record number of medical students and young physicians from around the world are here for the conference - more than 300 young people from Bulgaria, China, Russia, Ukraine, Ireland, Slovenia, Turkey and Poland. What are the latest achievements in medicine and can they be applied to our reality? Here with us to answer this question is Prof. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of MU-Pleven.

Prof. Tomov: It is true that we are hosting the XIV International Scientific Conference for Students and Young Doctors but it must be noted that the event is organized, in its entirety, by our students. The academic community at MU-Pleven supplies only logistics help and moral guidance. It is also a first for us to hold the forum in a five-day format. The record number of attendees and guests is truly remarkable but what is even more interesting are the guest lecturers - all of whom renowned experts in their fields. To name a few...

Interviewer: Please do.

Prof. Tomov: Prof. Dr. Kypros Nicolaides, Head of Fetal Medicine Center at King's College Hospital, London; Dr. Petya Chaveeva, MD, Certified specialist in Fetal Medicine under Prof. Nicolaides; Dr. Kenichiro Hasumi, MD, Founder of Hasumi International Research Foundation; Prof. Dr. Deen Man, Pathology Department, University of Maryland as well as Prof. Dr. Tsvetomir Lukanov, Head of the Department of Children Cardio Surgery, University Hospital "Heidelberg", Germany - who is also an alumni of MU-Pleven.

Interviewer: This is, indeed, evidence of the high level of the forum. The question, however, remains - when all is said and done and the event is over, will there be any

impact on the patients here, in Bulgaria? How will they benefit from the new developments in medicine? Will the young doctors be able to implement their newly acquired knowledge in Bulgaria?

Prof. Tomov: You and I both know that young people are a lot more pragmatic and knowledgeable than we - the older generations - care to give them credit for. The very fact they chose to hold this event under the motto "Cultivating a New Era" speaks volumes of their enthusiasm and aspirations of the future. The students were definitely inspired by the lecturers. They are also given ample opportunity to apply some of that theoretical knowledge into practice with the new and innovative fields in which Bulgarian medical universities are expanding. For example, MU-Pleven is a leading factor in robotic surgery, while the medical universities in Plovdiv and Varna have already established centers of translational medicine. Dr. Petya Chaveeva, MD - a Bulgarian - is now a Certified specialist in Fetal Medicine. Our students see the great strides Bulgarian medicine is making and are convinced their skills can be used not only abroad but in Bulgaria as well.

Interviewer: You've mentioned Prof. Dr. Kypros Nicolaides, who is one of the first to introduce Fetal Medicine to the world. You've also mentioned his student, Dr. Petya Chaveeva, who - in 2014 if I remember correctly - was the first to locally perform an intrauterine operation. She commented during this forum that MU-Pleven is the place to consider when talking about Fetal Medicine taking its first steps in Bulgaria. Is this truly the direction MU-Pleven is heading.

Prof. Tomov: MU-Pleven continues to develop one of the most advanced fields of modern surgery - minimally-invasive surgery. We certainly have the capabilities and facilities to improve upon what we have already been doing. Fetal surgery - as a branch of the broader field of minimally-invasive surgery is, naturally, an aspiration of ours, yes.

Interviewer: A month ago the new academic year began at MU-Pleven with a record number of applicants. What is new in terms of curriculum?

Prof. Tomov: For the first time in its history, MU-Pleven accepted students of Pharmacy field of study. Our long-held and much worked-for ambition to establish a new Faculty of Pharmacy at MU-Pleven finally came true with the completion of the new faculty building and with accepting the first 30 students to study Pharmacy at

MU-Pleven. It is, without a doubt, a work in progress but the beginning is important and we are proud of our achievement.

Interviewer: Professor Tomov, higher medical education is much sought-after in Bulgaria with many high school students aiming for it. Do you, however, believe the way it is handled, the process of it is correct? Is there anything concerning medical education in Bulgaria you'd personally like to change?

Prof. Tomov: In my opinion, which coincides with that of my fellow Rectors of the rest of the medical universities in Bulgaria, the product our system and our universities offer on the international market is of extremely high, world-class quality. It is universally known that our graduates receive certification to practice within EU borders. This is, however, only the tip of the iceberg. Our inquiries show specialists who train with us are a highly sought-after commodity based on skills and abilities, even disregarding certification. It is an unquestionable fact: we guarantee a quality education product to the job markets worldwide. So much so, there is a marked increase in interest of foreign high-school students towards our university and the qualifications we can offer. To guarantee, however, that this remains so, we have to invest heavily into higher medical education and work tirelessly to not fall off of the tide we're currently riding on.

Interviewer: I understand MU-Pleven is currently undergoing an audit?

Prof. Tomov: That is correct. I have, personally, no concerns - neither has the Governing Body of the university. On the contrary, we are happy to receive the auditors. A periodical check-up is always necessary. We need to know what we're doing right and what needs to be changed. Audits are a necessary measure of control. Before you ask, allow me to refrain from commenting on the situation in MU-Sofia. You must know that not all medical universities in Bulgaria allow themselves to go into undesirable practices and it is exactly through audits like these that we can set the record straight.

Interviewer: Before concluding our talk, am I to understand you approve of the Government regarding audits as standard practice rather than a last-minute, when-necessary practice?

Prof. Tomov: Exactly so.

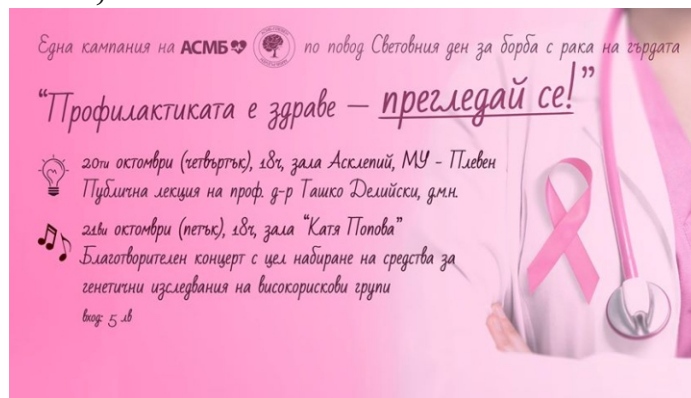
Interviewer: Thank you, Prof. Tomov, for taking the time to talk to us.

Prof. Tomov: My Pleasure.

AMSB ORGANIZES A CHARITY CAMPAIGN FOR THE WORLD BREAST CANCER DAY, 2016

In order to raise awareness for the World Breast Cancer Day – October 19th, the Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria (AMSB) organized a charity campaign under the motto "Healthy Life through Prophylaxis – Attend Regular Check-ups." The campaign took place from October 17th until October 21st under the patronage of Georg Spartanski, Mayor of Pleven and Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of MU-Pleven. The campaign's main purpose was to raise awareness and inform people of the specifics of breast cancer and its prophylaxis. The information days of the campaign began on the 17th and up until the 21st students from MU-Pleven spent time at the city center of Pleven, handing out fliers with important information about the serious condition.

On October 20th 2016, at "Asclepius" hall, MU-Pleven a public lecture was held, presented by Prof. Dr. Tashko Deliiski, themed "Cancer of the Mammary Gland – Prophylaxis and Contemporary Developments." The campaign was formally concluded on October 21st with a charity concert held at "Katya Popova" hall, Pleven. Collected funds from ticket sales will be used for investigations of high-risk groups.



FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM DEMONSTRATED AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - PLEVEN



On September 10th 2016 the new fingerprint identification system was demonstrated at University hospital - Pleven. Present at the demonstration were the Director of the hospital, Assoc. Prof. Tsvetan Lukanov and the Deputy Head of NHIF, Ivanka Krusteva.

Over 200 medical facilities around the country have already implemented the system and are registered at NHIF with another 50 waiting for the registration equipment to arrive. At University hospital - Pleven there are a total of 49 machines for fingerprint

identification at the moment of writing.

"The system is working and so far there have been no patients to decline registration", said the Deputy Minister of Health, Vanyo Sharkov. He further elaborated that if a patient needs to be quickly admitted to hospital, the use of the system is not required. Children and underage patients will be registered by their legal guardians or parents. Patients unable to be registered with the new system will be admitted with their passport instead.



PLEVEN MUNICIPALITY BOASTS THE HIGHEST DOCTOR-CITIZEN RATIO IN THE COUNTRY

A survey by the National Statistical Institute (NSI), as quoted by "Focus" media agency, on doctor-citizen ratio determined the average as 40.6 / 10 000. Depending on the municipality, this ratio varies widely within the 26.2 to 54.6 / 10 000 range. Naturally, the doctor-patient ratio is higher in cities where medical institutions congregate (university hospital, medical universities or colleges) with Pleven firmly leading with 54.6 doctors for every 10 000 citizens. Pleven also leads the GP - citizen statistics with a ratio of 8.1 / 10 000.

On contract in the many medical institutions across the country are - according to NSI date from late 2015 - 29 039 doctors. Dental medicine professionals are a little over 7.5 thousand with 6 746 of them working with the NHIF. A marked increases - 7.1% - is noted in the number of dental medicine professionals working in medical institutions as opposed to private practices.

Medical specialists in the field of Health Care working in various medical institutions across the country are estimated at a little over 47 300, of whom 30 972 nurses and 3 278 midwives.



THREE ALUMNI OF MU-PLEVEN AWARDED AT THE ANNUAL DAY OF THE DOCTOR CELEBRATIONS

On October 19th 2016 a ceremony was held in the city of Lovech to celebrate the day of the doctor. During the ceremony, three alumni of MU-Pleven received awards for their accomplishments. The "Lovech Municipality Doctor of the Year" award was received by Dr. Plamen Varbanov, MD. Dr. Varbanov is an alumnus of MU-Pleven. He had previously specialized in two fields: *Internal Medicine* and *Gastroenterology* and has been the head of *Gastroenterology* and *II Internal* Departments at the hospital in Lovech since 2001. Insignias for achievements and contributions to the medical practice were received by Dr. Nikolai Alexandrov and Dr. Presian Vasilev – both alumni of MU-Pleven. Dr. Alexandrov works at the Department of Orthopedics and Traumatology at the hospital in Lovech, while Dr. Vasilev is trainee physician, following his post-graduate studies in Gastroenterology at the same hospital.



SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS BRIEFINGS FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES-IN-TRAINING WERE HELD AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL – PLEVEN

A course in work safety and a healthy working environment was held at University Hospital – Pleven for the students of Nursing and Midwifery at the Faculty of Health Care. Eng. Valeri Ivanov was tasked to explain and teach the rules and regulations of work safety to the students. They will have to observe the rules during their internships at the largest practical training facility of MU-Pleven – the University Hospital. Natalya Bancheva and Yana Glogovska – specialists in infection control and prevention – presented instructions for hand hygiene. Ivalia Petkova, Nursing Officer at University Hospital – Pleven, welcomed the trainees, introduced them to the 150 years of history, accumulated by the hospital and congratulated them on their choice of a career.



AN ANTI-TERRORIST ATTACK DRILLS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES WERE HELD AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - PLEVEN

On 24th October 2016, medics from the Multiprofile University Hospital for Active Treatment - Pleven alongside the local fire brigade held drills for educational purposes.

The purpose of the drills was to establish behavior patterns and safety measures during a terrorist attack. The situations rehearsed involved fire, gas intoxication and terrorist bombing. The drills were part of a broader program aiming to familiarize the hospital personnel with the safety procedures and improve on the safe work conditions in the hospital.

Demonstrated were different procedures for safety or, if need be, resuscitation of victims with emphasis on the correct steps to be taken in any given moment of such an event. Further demonstration focused on protective clothing during a "dirty bombing" incident and the correct use of anti-fire equipment in case of fire.



EXAMINATIONS FOR THREE TYPES OF CANCER TO BE HELD AT PLEVEN MUNICIPALITY

A total of 218 citizens of Pleven municipality have received invitations for screening examinations for three types of cancer. The examinations are part of the nation-wide campaign concerning cancer screenings, in turn part of the National Program for Chronic and Noncommunicable Diseases, coordinated by the Regional Health Inspection - Pleven.

Women are to be examined for Cervical Cancer and Breast Cancer, men and women for Colon Cancer. A median of 70 people will undergo screening for each of the conditions.



MINIMALLY-INVASIVE TRANSPLANTATION OF MENISCUS AT "AVIS MEDICA" HOSPITAL, PLEVEN

On 30th September 2016, in "Avis Medica" hospital for multi-profile active treatment, Pleven an innovative surgical procedure resulted in a bloodless transplantation of a meniscus to a patient. The operation was performed by Dr. Halvajian, alumnus of MU-Pleven and Head of the Department of Orthopedics at "Avis Medica" hospital and Prof. Rene Verdonk, leading specialist in Orthopedics and Traumatology at Gant University - Belgium. This was his first time operating in Bulgaria, after arriving here as a guest of Dr. Halvajian.

The patient was a 21-year-old, born in Oreshak and after an operation 2 months prior part of his medial meniscus was removed which, if left unchecked, would result in shorter cartilage life and, in very short terms, degenerative alterations in the joint. This prompted the transplantation procedure.

The previously removed part of the meniscus was substituted by an active biopolymer - Actifit, to serve as a scaffold prompting growth in the remaining meniscus tissue and ultimately achieving restoration and

balance in the knee joint. The intervention was minimally-invasive, bloodless, arthroscopic and will allow for quick patient recovery.

Dr. Halvajian's team specializes in exactly minimally-invasive arthroscopic surgical interventions of the short and long joints. That is why, Avis Medica" hospital for multi-profile active treatment, Pleven often invites international and European specialists to perform at its facilities and enrich the team's experience.



Academia MEDICA

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Prepress: Engr. Silvia Emileva

Materials received are not to be returned. Authors are held responsible for the contents of their articles.

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**Academia Medica Newspaper
provides spaces for advertising**

Prices:

Entire page, A4 – 140.00lv.

½ page – 80.00lv.

¼ page – 40.00lv.

Excluding VAT.

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