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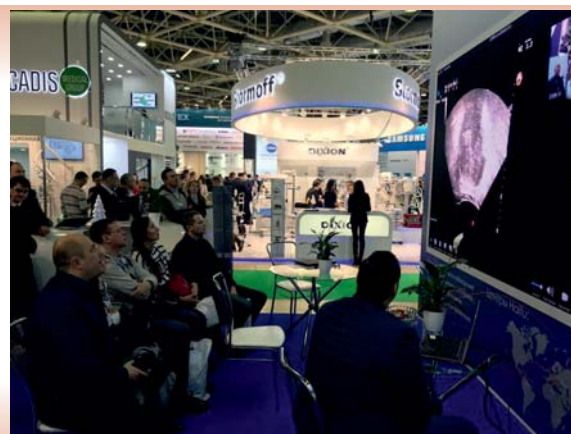
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MEDICAL COLLEGE PLEVEN CELEBRATES ITS 70th ANNIVERSARY

In the framework of the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the founding of Medical College - Pleven, on two consecutive days, the XVI National Scientific Session for Students and Teachers was held. This year's Session began on 29 October 2018 in the Ambroise Pare Hall of the Telecommunication Center. The event was the first of a series of initiatives to mark 70 years since the establishment of Medical College - Pleven. The rector of MU - Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, PhD, MD as well as the Director of MC - Pleven, Prof. Evgenia Barzashka, PhD, addressed the participants. Members of the audience had the opportunity to view the "70 Years Medical College-Pleven: Proven Experience and Traditions in Education" movie. The tape is a joint project of Medical College (MC) - Pleven and the TV program "Career" on TV "Europe".

In the two days of the forum, 23 reports and 5 posters were presented, divided into two sections: "Medical-Diagnostic Activities" and "Social and Pharmaceutical Activities". They discussed major public health, health and social care issues as well as current trends and experiences in these key areas. 98 students and lecturers from the specialties: Medical Laboratory Assistant, X-ray Technician, Assistant Pharmacist, Social Activities as well as from the Faculty of Public Health took part in the Session. Students and lecturers from other higher education institutions in the country also took part in the scientific session: "Yordanka Filaretova" MC at Sofia Medical University, Medical College affiliated to Medical University - Plovdiv, VTU "St. Cyril and Methodius", Sofia



University" St. Kliment Ohridski ", Faculty of Biology, NCPHA, KSSI Directorate, Department of Occupational Therapy, "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" university, Burgas, Department of Preclinical and Clinical Disciplines. Medical specialists from the Vascular Surgery Clinic, MMA - Sofia also took part in the discussions with their research and insights on the topics.

After the first part of the Scientific Session (which included many interesting and important reports, reviews, posters and discussions presented by members of Pleven's medical academia and the guests of the Session) was concluded, on 30 October 2018 in the Magnum Hall, Second Clinical Base, a celebration took place on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Medical College. The event gathered together students, alumni and college lecturers. Among the official guests of the event was the Mayor of Pleven Municipality, Georg Spartanski. The Director of the Medical College - Pleven, Dr. Evgenia Barzashka greeted guests and colleagues. In her speech, Prof. Barzashka stressed that, despite the transformations and changes of the educational system in Bulgaria,

Medical College - Pleven stands strong and is determined to provide highly-qualified health care professionals for both local and international health care markets.

The Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski further added: "70 years are a decent age. For a human life, they are a good occasion to take stock of" in his address. He pointed out that the local and state government once saw a great potential in developing medicine in Pleven, which later gave rise to the foundation of the next medical pillar, Medical University - Pleven. Georg Spartanski pointed out that the medical school of old, which was later elevated into a college, has produced over the past 70 years more than 11,000 professionally qualified specialists. He later concluded that the local government was looking forward to even more productive cooperation in the years to come.



THE STUDENTS AT MU-PLEVEN CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL DAY

For the 6th consecutive time, the sports building "Prof. Dr. Nedko Kyuchukov" at MU-Pleven became a place where art, culture, traditions, song and dance intertwined. More than 250 students from 11 nationalities presented their lifestyle, culture, songs and dances in an attractive way. The event coincided with the International Students Day - November 17, when students protest major issues in countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Greece.

International Day is organized by students with the support of the Management of MU - Pleven. Every year, the initiative attracts students from other medical universities in Bulgaria and thus brings together the students, administration,



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leadership and the general community of Pleven. 11 nationalities - Italy, Bulgaria, Nepal, India, Germany, Pakistan, Somalia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Africa - presented their traditional food and drinks as well as interesting posters related to geographical location, culture and population. The final evaluation was based on criteria categorized in four categories: "Decoration", "Food & Beverages", "Dance and Song Presentation" and "Costumes".

For the first time, the Italian team included as part of the presentation a recitation of the poem "Viva Italia", which sounded to a guitar accompaniment. The poem was translated into English for the attendees.

The Bulgarian team performed a traditional dance routine. With the picturesque traditional costumes



bearing the Bulgarian spirit and culture, the students immersed the participants in the magic of the Bulgarian dance, that has successfully survived through the ages.

The participants from the Japanese team turned into ninjas. In their performance they included songs and dances, in which they unveiled their musical and dance skills and later deservedly received the grand prize in the category "Best Presentation".

Extremely emotional was the participation of the Pakistan team. The dances they presented - "Bhangra" and "Giddha" - were from the Punjab region, which is the largest in Pakistan. By mixing hip-hop songs with Urdu, Hindi, Punjab and English texts, the Pakistani band demonstrated the growing popularity of western music in Pakistan.

The message from the African team was related to the idea of Africa as a continent of many countries and nationalities. Through posters, traditional cuisine and dancing, students from Nigeria, Kenya and other African countries presented their uniqueness and the strength of their



culture.

The team of Nepal presented a fusion of tradition and modernity in dance and songs. The Lache Dance, fascinating with its energetic performance and traditional costumes, symbolizing the unity and victory of Good over Evil.

The teams of Somalia, Sri Lanka and India were no less colorful. In an original way - through their dances, which included tradition and modernity - they presented their countries.

International Day this year was dedicated to the noble cause of helping children in need. Volunteers from the Bulgarian Red Cross distributed leaflets and brochures related to the upcoming blood donation campaigns.



A DOUBLE GRADUATION CEREMONY – FOR BOTH MC-PLEVEN AND THE FACULTY OF HEALTH CARE WAS HELD AT MU-PLEVEN



On October 31st, 2018 in the Magnum Hall of the Second Clinical Center, Pleven the graduation ceremony of Medical College-Pleven and the Faculty of Health Care at the Medical University - Pleven was held. The event was included in the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Medical College in Pleven.

Attending were the academic

leadership of MC - Pleven and MU - Pleven, graduates and parents. Official guests were Assoc. Prof. Venka Stefanova, Director of RHIF; Nadia Dimitrova, Chairperson of the Regional Branch of the Bulgarian Association of Healthcare Professionals; Dr. Elsa Pacheva, Head of Health Care and Social Activities Department at Pleven Municipality; Ivaila Petkova, Head Nurse at University

Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" - Pleven.

Celebratory address for graduates, teachers and parents was prepared by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Care, Assoc. Prof. Alexander Valkov.

The Director of the Medical College - Pleven, Assoc. Prof. Evgenia Barzashka, PhD, also addressed the graduate students. While emphasizing the nobility and unique nature of the profession they have chosen, Prof. Barzashka expressed her wishes for the graduates to follow through with their choices and become seasoned professionals.

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The Rector of MU - Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, expressed his satisfaction with the excellent graduates, the proficiency of whom speaks about the quality of education and the level of responsibility of student body. At the end of his congratulatory address, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov made an appeal to the graduates not to forget their university, wherever they may end up practicing their trade; to protect the name and honor of their lecturers, parents and country.

These addresses from the academic leadership were answered by the valedictorians of the specialties "Assistant Pharmacist" -Svetla Eneva and "Nursing" -Margarita Dimitrova.

The ceremony concluded with the taking of the Hippocratic Oath, with which the graduates solemnly promised to follow the core values and mission of the University, the Code of Ethics, and the best academic traditions.



THE STUDENTS AT MC-PLEVEN ARE HIGHLY MOTIVATED AND CAPABLE

An interview with the Director of MC-Pleven, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Evgenia Barzashka



Q: Associate Professor Barzashka, first of all I would like to congratulate you on the anniversary celebration of MC - Pleven. Can tell

our readers a bit more about the history of college?

A: The Medical College (MC) - Pleven is the successor of the first medical school in Pleven, established in 1948 as a school for nursing. It gradually expands its sphere of activities, new specialties are revealed, including X-ray Technicians and Medical Laboratory Assistants; Rehabilitation and Midwifery are also included. With a degree of satisfaction, I can say that for its 70-year history, MC-Pleven has undergone several stages of transformation with a number of changes in the education system and the process has provided the country with many health care professionals, of whom we can definitely be proud.

Q: I guess that for the last 70 years, statistics on the quality of education MC - Pleven are available. Do you think there is a decrease or an increase in student learning abilities compared to previous years?

A: Thankfully, due to the well-established traditions, experience and numerous improvements to training and educational practices as well as generations of elite lecturers, the graduates of Pleven Medical College find a

good professional realization in both Bulgaria and abroad. For the past 70 years, 11091 students, specialists in health care and social activities, have graduated. This year, 64 graduates have joined that number. I believe there is no drop in knowledge absorption, but there are ambitious and less ambitious people everywhere, which makes this issue difficult to tackle.

Our students also participate actively in all scientific forums and events of MU-Pleven and are an inseparable part of successes of the institution itself.

Q: Do you believe today's students perceive their education as a responsible mission and duty?

A: Yes! The overall impression I have is that the students from MC-Pleven are highly motivated and eager to become good specialists in their respective professional spheres.

Q: What challenges do you face and what responsibilities do you have in your capacity as Director of MK-Pleven?

A: The main responsibilities are related to the challenge of creating conditions for successfully building up the authority of the collage, as well as the quality and contemporary training of professional staff in order to increase the morale of the students in the respective specialties as well as to facilitate the continuous exchange of knowledge, experience and innovative

ideas between lecturers and students. In the new year 2019, my hope is to have a powerful and active student-candidate campaign in order to select talented and motivated students.

Q: A truly pressing issue is the number of graduates planning for a professional future abroad. Successful professional realization or financial concerns is the main reason for young people leaving the country in your opinion?

A: Fortunately, our students find a good realization in Bulgaria and few are willing to seek opportunities abroad. For those who do, however, my view is that the reasons are mostly financial. It is our generation's responsibility to make Bulgaria attractive to our children.

Q: As a wrap-up question, I would like to ask you about the importance of MC-Pleven for you personally. What are your hopes and wishes for your colleagues and students?

A: For me, personally, MC-Pleven is a mission to fulfill the tasks I have described in the previous questions. I want to wish all colleagues and students from Medical College and the whole University to stay healthy and have the best of luck! Be proud of what has been achieved over the years and let us welcome the best Christmas and the happiest and most unforgettable New Year!



THE OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY OF THE FACULTY OF PHARMACY AT MU-PLEVEN WAS HELD ON 1 NOVEMBER 2018



The official holiday of Medical University - Pleven was marked by the opening of the Faculty of Pharmacy on 1 November 2018 - the Day of Education and Enlightenment. As per tradition, the event began with a solemn sanctification, served by the Metropolitan of Pleven, Ignatius. Guests of the ceremony were the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Krasimir Karakachanov,

Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Education Petar Nikolov, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Health Prof. Krasimir Gigov, MPs Dr. Kalin Popovski, Stefan Burdjev and Prof. Anelia Klisarova, District Governor Miroslav Petrov, the chairman of Pleven Municipal Council Martin Mitev, Mayor Georg Spartanski, former and current lecturers at MU-Pleven.

The Rector of the university, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov presented to the guests the well-equipped, high-tech halls, where the students are trained according and adequate to the world standards.



The faculty was initially established with a decision of the National Assembly of Bulgaria on 30 March 2016 as part of the structure of Medical University-Pleven. With the solemn ceremony, the strategic goal of the Management of the University to establish and reveal the fourth major unit in its structure after the faculties of Medicine, Public Health and Health Care has been realized. The University has already had its first admission of 30 Major Degree students in the 2016/2017 academic year. As of the moment of writing, 134 Master Degree students in Pharmacy are being trained at the university. The academic staff involved in the education process of the Faculty of Pharmacy includes 84 highly-capable specialists.



CELEBRATORY CEREMONY AND A PROCESSION MARKED THE GRADUATION OF YEAR 2018 STUDENTS AT THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE



On December 4 was the solemn promotion of the young doctors from the Faculty of Medicine. In Magnum Hall, graduates were formally awarded their higher education diplomas. The ceremony started with the passing of the symbols of the university in front of the building of the Rectorate. Lead by the management of MU - Pleven, a procession then started from the Rectorate of the Medical University and headed towards Vazrazhdane Square. A wreath was placed in front of the Eternal Fire of the Chapel-mausoleum "St. George the Victorious".

Official guests of the ceremony were the Chairman of Pleven Municipal Council, Martin Mitev; the Mayor of Pleven Municipality, Georg Spartanski and the Honorary Consul of Israel in Bulgaria, Prof. Dr. Krasimir Metodiev. With a speech about the medicine of the future and the challenges faced by young doctors, the Rector of MU - Pleven, Prof. Slavcho

Tomov greeted the graduates and urged them to follow their dreams and never back down despite the difficulties and the uncertainties that might await them. The special guest of the celebration - the Honorary Consul of Israel in Bulgaria, Prof. Dr. Krasimir Metodiev - also addressed the young medics.

The Mayor of Pleven, Georg Spartanski expressed his satisfaction with the fact that MU - Pleven has for many years become an emblem for the city and an indicator for this is the growing number of international students who are drawn to Pleven in order to study medicine.

The young medics were also congratulated by the year 2018 valedictorian, Dr. Iva Simeonova, who, on behalf of all the graduates, thanked the parents, teachers and relatives for their continuous support.

The ceremony ended with the solemn taking of the Hippocratic Oath.

A TWO-DAY SCIENTIFIC SESSION TITLED 'SCIENCE AND BUSINESS' WAS HELD AT MU-PLEVEN

Medical University - Pleven organized a two-day scientific session "Science and Business" under the motto "Active promotion of PhD students, postgraduates and young scientists to potential employers and partners in future joint projects" under the project BG05M2OP001-2.009-0031-C01, titled "Creating a center for the further education of PhD students, graduates, post-graduate students and young scientists at the Faculty of Medicine at MU-Pleven". The event was held on 28 and 29 November 2018 in the Telecommunications Endoscopic Center.

The aim of the forum was to present collaborative research projects, on which target group members have

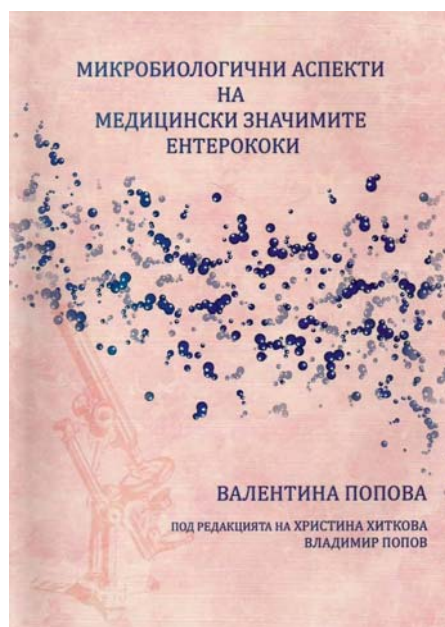
worked, as well as present an opportunity for inclusion in research teams to develop such projects. The schedule of the event was subdivided into three sessions: "Presenting Opportunities for Development of Young Scientists in an Environment Focused on Developing New Competencies for the Benefit of Businesses in the Medical Field"; "Presenting Opportunities for the Development of Research Projects at MU - Pleven and Opportunities for the Inclusion of Young Scientists in the Work Done at "Leonardo da Vinci Competence Center " as well as " Presenting Business Organizations, Partners of MU - Pleven".



HONORING THE MEMORY OF DR. VALENTINE POPOVA

On November 24, 2018 the Art Center - Pleven gathered many friends, colleagues and relatives of Dr. Valentina Popova at the presentation of the monographic work in her memory: **Microbiological aspects of medically significant enterococci**.

Dr. Popova devoted his final years to studying the country's first epidemic outbreak of vancomycin-resistant enterococci isolated from the clinical trials of patients. The model of the monographic work, which was edited by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hristina Hitkova and Dr. Vladimir Popov, is borrowed from Caliphian scientists who had previously created similar work to honor the passing of a colleague. The concept is based on a biographical part and the scientific work on the subject, emphasizing Dr. Popova's strong character of a person with aspirations and successes as well as her unshakable belief in the power and importance of science. The



publication introduces the taxonomy of enterococci, the introduction and the validation of the term in the scientific literature. It describes the study and classification until 1984 in the final separation of the genus Enterococci. The main characteristics and methods of identification of genus enterococci are also included.

Dr. Valentina Popova had been an assistant professor at MU - Pleven since 1994. With her dedication to her work, she had earned the respect of not only her colleagues but also her students. After her passing in 2015, at the initiative of the Head of the Department of Microbiology and Virology at MU - Pleven, Prof. Dr. Maria Sredkova, PhD and with the support of the Rector of MU-Pleven, Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, a study hall at the Medical University was named after her in recognition of her contribution to the scientific and academic world.



A 'TELEBRIDGE' TO MOSCOW WAS SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED AT THE HIFU CENTER, "ST. MARINA" UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



Within the framework of the medical convention "Russian Health Week" through innovative one-hour telework (telebridge), the team at the HIFU Center at St. Marina hospital - Pleven established a connection between Pleven and Moscow, Russia. The exhibition was held from 03 to 07 December 2018 under the patronage of the Russian President, Vladimir Putin. The forum was organized by several Russian state institutions with the participation of a number of high-tech healthcare companies offering state-of-the-art

technologies and medicines in various health spheres.

The audience in Moscow observed HIFU live surgery, in which a non-invasive thermal melting, by use of focussed ultrasound, eradicated a patient's nine-inch myoma node. The telemedicine connection was made possible by a special communication software.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dobromir Dimitrov, head of the Pleven's team, opened the broadcast with a presentation of Bulgaria, the city of Pleven, the Medical University of Pleven and the University Hospital "Sveta Marina". Dr. Ventsislav Georgiev, a gynecologist with experience in implementing HIFU technology, held a demonstration with direct communication in Russian with the audience in the exhibition hall in Moscow. During the procedure, which was performed with minimal anesthesia, the patient was in constant contact with both the HIFU team and the audience in Russia. The procedure was well-tolerated by the patient without any significant complaints or discomforts. The ultrasound surgery lasted 60 minutes, the average energy used was 350W, and the patient was successfully discharged from the HIFU center in the early afternoon. The telemedicine connection had an extremely high signal quality and was completed without technical problems. The members of the surgical team were Prof. Dr. Dobromir Dimitrov, Dr. Ventsislav Georgiev, Dr. Nadia Stanislavova and Dr. Marian Dukanov.



'THE DOCTOR THAT INSPIRES ME' CAMPAIGN

The second phase of the 'Doctor That Inspires Me' Campaign was dedicated to urology. A total of 19 doctors were nominated - six Professors, two Associate Professors and 11 doctors. Within a month, doctors, medical professionals and students had the opportunity to support each of the nominated urologists. Voting took place online via their CredoWeb accounts. More than 300 people voted. First place was awarded to Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Kolev, a urologist from the University Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" - Pleven.



FREE BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL EXAMINATIONS AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL "DR. GEORGI STRANSKI" – PLEVEN



On November 14, 2018, 'Dr. G. Stranski' University Hospital organized free blood sugar examinations. The campaign was supported by 'Viking and Brown'. Mobile teams measured the blood sugar levels of everyone who wanted them measured. Another initiative on the World Day for the Study of Diabetes was the conducting of a lecture on "Control and Self-control of Blood Sugar Levels" in the 6th hall of UMHAT 'Dr. G. Stranski' by the sister (senior nurse) Hinkova - a medical specialist from the Clinic of Endocrinology at the Hospital.



AN INITIATIVE BY THE CLINIC OF NEUROLOGY AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL "DR. GEORGI STRANSKI" – PLEVEN

An information campaign and free blood pressure examinations were carried out on 29 October 2018. The occasion was World Stroke Day. The initiative was titled "What is Your Reason to Prevent a Stroke?" And was organized by First Cardiology Clinic at the University Hospital "Dr. G. Stranski" - Pleven, headed by Prof. Dr. Snezhana Tisheva. Assistance for the organization process was provided by the National Heart Network together with the Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria, Pleven Branch, 'Mizia 96' AD, 'Moni-MSD-M' EAD. A free prophylactic screening was performed with the AFIB technology, which records atrial fibrillation and measures the risk factors for metabolic syndrome. Information materials for cardiovascular disease prevention were distributed.



ANTI-AIDS CAMPAIGN AT MU-PLEVEN



For the World AIDS Day - December 1, RHI - Pleven, together with Chennai Sadak - a representative of the Association of Medical Students in Bulgaria - Pleven Branch, organized a campaign for the prevention and control of HIV and AIDS. The campaign was held on 3 December 2018 at the Medical University of Pleven, Faculty of Pharmacy from 10 am till 2 pm. The examinations were free and anonymous. The interest in the campaign was great from all university students. Everyone who underwent examination had the opportunity to receive leaflets and brochures informing about the risks of the disease and how to prevent it.



A PREMATURE BABIES' DAY WAS ORGANIZED BY THE NEONATOLOGY CLINIC AT 'DR. G. STRANSKI' UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



On the 17th of November - World Day of Premature Babies - a celebration for the children and parents, patients of the Clinic of Neonatology at "Dr. G. Stranski" University Hospital - Pleven was organized at the "Violet Cafe Bar". Dr. Victoria Atanasova, Head of the Clinic of Neonatology, gave a special thanks to Christina Yancheva for her second generous donation. Last year, the financial support went to the renovation and refurbishing of the clinic.

With a well-known Bulgarian folk dance, the students from Yordan Yovkov School also greeted children. The kids had their fair share fun and later enjoyed a festive cake.



DONATION FROM LIONS CLUB – PLEVEN



Donation for the Emergency Department of the University Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" was made by the Lions Club Pleven. A fully realistic model of an adult head with a comprehensive airway management system, suitable for introductory and advanced training for students, graduate students and qualified medical teams was received by the ward. "Advanced Airway Larry" is a US product that, on 22 November 2018, was used by the Head of the Emergency Department, Dr. Petko Stefanovski, to hold a training session for the medics of the ward.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT MU-PLEVEN WITH AN INITIATIVE TO HELP ELDERLY BULGARIANS



The philanthropic initiatives of the students from MU-Pleven are becoming a very common occurrence. "Hearts of Pleven" is yet another new project, initiated by the international students Mariam Jaffari, Sahid Shitu and Hadi Ansar (2-year students, specializing in Medicine), to help elderly people in the city and the region who are in a financial difficulty. The main motivation of future doctors is the desire to improve living conditions for the elderly who are alone and unable to cover their daily expenses for food and basic necessities with the low state pensions they receive.





DONATION FROM THE 'BULGARIAN CHRISTMAS'

The 'Bulgarian Christmas' campaign donated equipment to the University Hospital "Dr. Georgi Stranski" - Pleven. An apparatus for shock-wave therapy and another one for controlled cerebral hypothermia were received by both the Clinic of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine and the Clinic of Neonatology. The heads of the two clinics - Assoc. Prof. Maya Krastanova, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Victoria Atanasova, expressed their gratitude for the noble gesture and stated that the donated machines were of particular importance for the treatment of their patients.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

I sincerely wish all of you impeccable health and the strength necessary to do good, be productive and successful in the new year 2019.

Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, MD,
RECTOR of Medical University - Pleven

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