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# ADDRESS BY THE RECTOR OF MU-PLEVEN ON OCCASION OF 24 MAY CELEBRATING THE DAY OF BULGARIAN ENLIGHTENMENT AND CULTURE, AND SLAVONIC SCRIPT



Dear lecturers and students,

The Word is the mightiest weapon God has wielded. The brother saints, Cyril and Methodius, created the Slavonic script and translated the Word of God in a language Slavic people understand and speak. These messengers and servants of the Lord are crowned with everlasting glory because "whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven". (Mat. 5:19)

Bulgarians have lauded the brother saints for 12 centuries. After 863 their mission led Bulgarians, as a newly made nation, to find their identity in the sacred word.

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church observes the day of the brother saints Cyril and Methodius on 11 May. They were canonized for the translation and popularizing the necessary liturgical books in Old Slavonic, and for spreading Christianity among Slavonic peoples. It is no coincidence that the first Slavic pope, John Paul II, proclaimed Constantine-Cyril the Philosopher and his brother Methodius patrons of Europe. The Holy Orthodox Church solemnly honors them in chants "God-wise Cyril and Methodius, equals to the apostles and teachers of the Slavic countries, pray to the Father almighty to lead the Slavs in Orthodoxy and unanimity, to pacify the world and to save our souls."

This year we celebrate the holiest Christian holidays – Palm Sunday, Easter and 24 May – during a pandemic, a mass disaster we have not experienced in decades. Perhaps it is no coincidence the global trial, COVID-19, began right at Lent which is itself a "quarantine" – quaranta meaning forty. Is it not appropriate in this time of trial to turn

precisely to this kind of "quarantine" – spirituality, prayer and the Word, humility – in order to successfully resist the "viruses" of modern times?

I am proud that for seven years MU-Pleven academia has very appropriately and solemnly observed the holiest Bulgarian holiday – 24 May by awarding the "Outstanding Student" prize for high achievements in student and academic work, as well as the "I am fluent in Bulgarian" prize to foreign students for mastering the language of our Alma Mater.

I am also proud that in the face of the COVID-19 disaster, MU-Pleven stood out with its incredible scientific potential – lecturers, scientists and experts, whose actions made them modern-day heroes. The crisis pushed Medical University-Pleven to adapt quickly to educating in an online environment, the newly opened Virology Laboratory at the University studied the coronavirus, and last but not least, many of our students volunteered to fight the epidemic. Through the power of words, our students connected with their lecturers in a virtual international network to transfer knowledge and scientific ideas. Thus, Pleven academia proved that even in times of pandemic, it remains true to its calling to educate and instill values and virtues in younger generations.

On celebrations like today's, I like to quote our favorite contemporary author, Georgi Gospodinov. "After a heavy crisis like this one come others, less prominent, but still destructive crises of meaning. Yet another depletion of the reservoir of meaning. The Great Depression is not just a term in economics. The virus of fear will roam at least a year after the coronavirus is gone. Thank God the vaccine to our fears and depression was found centuries ago. Just reach for the bookshelf." Because, "you live as long as you are telling a story. As long as you turn the numbers into people, as long as you hurt for them and you feel compassion and empathy when you read, when you listen to music and when you look at paintings, as long as you think about death you are still alive."

HAPPY HOLIDAY!

Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, MD

## AUTOMATED SYSTEMS AT MEDICAL UNIVERSITY-PLEVEN (BASIC FUNCTIONALITIES AND POTENTIAL)

A high-speed internet connection has been provided in order to maintain and improve communications and internet traffic at MU-Pleven – supported by the academic network of the university. Internet will be provided through high-speed channels which allow for 10Gbps connectivity. This, in turn, meets the requirements for conducting remote online



*cont. from p.2*

sessions in the process of remote learning with multiple students simultaneously. To ensure communications, MU-Pleven is a member of the National Research Network, which coordinates relations with the international pan-European network GEANT.

Integrating and providing access to various learning materials in various remote distance electronic forms of learning and independent preparation and review is carried out through a specially developed virtual environment (platform) for distance learning (DL). The e-learning and distance learning system (EDLS) complies with the vision of the Ministry of Education and Science for the introduction of distance learning, independent training, and review.

The EDLS virtual environment was developed under the European project "Innovative and modern education at MU-Pleven" in 2014 and received very high rating. The system is compatible with SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) and is in accordance with MU-Pleven teaching methods. EDLS is based on the popular distance learning system "Moodle", modified and adapted to the special teaching needs of higher medical education at MU-Pleven. The system has its own user interface and a number of modules for distance learning, including tools to set up virtual classrooms. This is what sets it apart from platforms used by other universities.

MU-Plevens EDLS has many built-in tools to aid students in using integrated teaching materials from various courses, see what results they have achieved in tests and tasks. All study materials are compliant with standardized MU-Pleven curricula, which is specific to the University and monitored by the Quality Control System at MU-Pleven. EDLS and materials integrated in it are regulated by internal regulation, accessible by all lecturers and students. In addition, periodical training and consultations on work with the system are carried out by the team at the Center for Distance Learning at MU-Pleven. MU-

Pleven's administration is responsible for interpreting results and analyses. The two systems are highly integrated, and lecturers and students, as well as doctoral students and postgraduates, are registered in the administrative system from where they receive their rights to access the teaching materials for all courses integrated in EDLS. The success of the students in tests and tasks, assigned through the system is stored in EDLS and is synchronized with the administrative system. It also contains all the grades that students have received in semester exams and they are entered in the general ledgers of the university.

The e-learning and distance learning system is used for both independent distance learning and for conducting online classes.

The main purpose of EDLS in MU-Pleven is to ensure independent training and self-control through remote synchronous and asynchronous e-learning, including the use of virtual classrooms. This does not exclude its application in full remote online forms of training and control in pre-clinical and some clinical courses as well as online learning and training, imposed by the emergency situation in the country.

Distance learning is being conducted following a high evaluation by the NEAA in 2016, on distance learning in MA degree program "Public Health and Health Management". Since then, there has been a steady flow of distance-learning students, as well as several alumni classes.

Assoc. Prof. Eng. Georgi Tsanev was born in Tryavna. He completed his secondary education at the Technical School of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering in Lovech. In 1976 he graduated from the National Military University in Veliko Tarnovo with a degree in "Internal Combustion Engines", a qualified mechanical engineer. In 1986 he graduated from the Technical University "Angel Kanchev"-Ruse, a qualified specialist engineer in Microprocessor Technology. In 1995

he earned his PhD at the Specialized Scientific Council at the Higher Attestation Commission - Sofia in "Elements and devices of automation and computer technology". In 2006 he graduated "Medical Informatics and Health management" at MU-Pleven. His research interests are in the field of microprocessor technology and its application for automation of processes in management and office automation. He has more than 90 scientific publications in the country and abroad, seven inventions, a number of engineering solutions and technical products based on microprocessor devices used in production. He has authored more than 10 student books and guides. He is a member of scientific and public organizations such as: the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria, the International Organization of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). His qualifications enable him to conduct courses in many Bulgarian universities such as "St. Cyril and St. Methodius" UVT, Vasil Levski National Military University - Veliko Tarnovo, Agro-Business and Regional Development University - Plovdiv, Angel Kanchev Technical University - Ruse, Medical University - Pleven. He has held senior positions in the management system of higher education, as head of department, vice-dean, dean and Vice-Rector for Academic and Scientific Affairs at Vasil Levski National Military University - Veliko Tarnovo. Currently, he is an associate professor of Medical informatics at the Department of Social Medicine and Health Management and Department of Health Care Management, Medical Ethics and Information Technology at MU-Pleven. He is also head of the Information Technology Sector, chairman of the General Assembly of the Faculty of Public Health and Chairman of the Council for Information Activity and Director of the Center for Distance Learning at MU-Pleven.

*Assoc. Prof. Eng. G. Tsanev - Director of the Center for Distance Learning*

## PLEVEN WAS PART OF THE SECOND EUROPEAN WEEK OF PUBLIC HEALTH

At a time when the world continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the European Public Health Association (EUPHA) is committed to sharing its knowledge and experience at the Second European Public Health Week during 11-15 May 2020 under the motto "Joining forces for healthier populations." More than 100 online events from more than 25 countries were registered.

The five themes planned for each day of the week were related to the overarching theme "COVID-19 Collaboration, Coordination, Communication". Monday 11 May focused on "Promoting health through the Global Goals"; Tuesday 11 May was dedicated to "Primary Care in the Digital Age". This day also coincided with the International Day of Nurses and became a unique opportunity to honor health professionals in Europe. The theme on Wednesday was "Staying Together for Mental Health" and presented examples of how people can support each other in times of social isolation, especially vulnerable groups. Efforts to prevent health inequalities from escalating during the pandemic

were reflected in Thursday's theme, "Equal Health for All." On the final day of the week (May 15th), the focus was on "Grow Old, Grow Healthy" at a time when the health of older people is particularly at risk.

The Bulgarian Public Health Association in Pleven registered 35 online lectures, webinars, campaigns, interviews and others realized in 8 cities: in Sofia by representatives of the National Center for Public Health and Analysis, and in 7 regional centers of the Faculties of Public Health in Pleven, Ruse, Plovdiv, Varna, Shumen, Burgas, Medical Faculty and Medical College in Stara Zagora.

The EUPHA initiative, co-financed by the European Union Health Program and supported by the WHO Regional Office, was launched with a webinar in Brussels with representatives of the European Commission, the WHO Regional Office, EUPHA, the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, the European Association of nursing associations and others.

*Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gena Grancharova,  
Chair of the Bulgarian Public Health Association*

## NEW CANDIDATE STUDENT EXAM DATES FOR MEDICINE AND PHARMACY AT MU-PLEVEN

Medical University - Pleven canceled in-person early entrance exams for bachelor's and master's specialties after the state of emergency was declared on 13.03.2020.

At an online meeting of the Academic Council, a decision was made to conduct online early entrance exams only for bachelor's degrees. Two dates were set - 9 and 16 May. A total of 92 prospective students expressed a desire to sit them.

Following the recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science, the university decided to conduct in-person entrance exams for master's degrees specialties "Medicine" and "Pharmacy"

and set new dates for them. The biology exam will be held on 7 July, and the chemistry exam 10 July. Candidate students who have applied for these early exams are automatically redirected. These candidates should add a copy of their diploma to their profiles. Fees paid for attending the early exams are valid. Candidate students who have not yet registered for the exams should submit applications by attaching copies of their diplomas and a document certifying a paid fee in the module for candidate students. The deadline for submitting documents online is 20 June - 3 July 2020.

Early entrance exams for the bachelor's

specialties at Medical University - Pleven were held in-person in February and March in the cities of Vratsa, Montana, Veliko Tarnovo, Vidin and Razgrad, and online in May. The date for taking the regular entrance exam in biology for these specialties remains 21 July 2020. Candidate students who have successfully passed the early exams should submit their papers before 3 July. Candidate students approved for early admission must enroll between 20.06. and 03.07.2020. Those not enrolled in this period may apply for participation in the regular examination session.

Deadlines remain unchanged.

*Information: V. Dukova*

## 24 MAY – DAY OF THE BULGARIAN ALPHABET, LETTERS AND CULTURE – CELEBRATED FOR MORE THAN 200 YEARS

Our letters are our identity and our contribution to the cultural heritage of European civilization. From the time of St. Cyril and St. Methodius, Kliment Ohridski, Chernorizets Hrabar, and during the darkest centuries of its history, the Bulgarian language has been preserved and has developed its beautiful structures - flexible and free, and cheerful. How magnificent the Bulgarian verb! "The verb," extols Prof. Alexander Balabanov, "there is a special cult in the Bulgarian language to it." It is capable of expressing "all the nuances and images and half-images and ripples of ripples of the thought, of action or of state, the moods rapidly, imperceptibly changing." It is difficult "to use the many tenses and moods, and singularities and multiplicities correctly." Such a wealth of words lies in the patterns and meanings of words! For example - how many new words hide in the adjective blue: azure, bluing, bruise, bluish, blush etc. Such a benediction

for men of letters are the movable accent and the relatively unconstricted sentence structure!

The Bulgarian language is rich and complex, and difficult both for teaching and learning. But teaching Bulgarian is not limited to mastering language knowledge and communication skills in the field of the chosen specialty, it is a complex process, which includes learning about Bulgarian culture, history, customs, and heritage. A teacher provides language training and intercultural communication with students, who represent a linguistically and culturally diverse audience. So, the teacher is faced with a number of challenges not the least of which - maintaining active student interest, inspiring consistency in studying the language through individual approach.

In recent months, in the unusual situation caused by the spread of COVID-19, we have all faced new, unfamiliar obstacles to learning that we had to

overcome on the go. Bulgarian language teachers started preparing teaching materials and their integration into the distance learning system. And classes continued the first day! We worked hard, as a team, synchronized and dedicated, to ensure quality and complete training, despite the situation. Of course, this would not have been possible if it were not for the students who, while scattered in all parts of the world, were always online and on time. The virtual classroom acquired the meaning of a haven of shared support, of connection to former academic life. There was awareness that teachers and students were part of a common cause and it had to be brought to an end. They knew they were part of a revolution in education. There were many new experiences and lessons. And thus, until the last day of the semester - tired but satisfied. A clear mind tackling a mission always leads to a positive result!

Happy holiest of holidays! And may letters be eternal!

*Written by: A. Beneva, Head of the  
Bulgarian Language Division at DLST*





## MORE THAN 85% OF MU-PLEVEN STUDENTS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN E-LEARNING

discussion, review tests, etc. An important and integral part of the training is real-time video conference lectures and seminars to discuss clinical cases with students.

The University Distance and E-Learning Center has its own BigBlueButton online classroom server, as well as its own JitsiMeet video conferencing server. Zoom video conferencing is also widely used. Thanks to the assistance of the Ministry of Education and Science, as well as Google and Microsoft, all students and lecturers of MU - Pleven have access to the global learning platforms – Google and Microsoft. Google Meet as well as Microsoft Teams are also used for video conferencing.

Scheduling with students is also carried out in several ways: through the system of administrative services of the university; through a distance learning portal – forum and direct messages, and through specially created groups in Facebook, Viber, Whatsapp.

Although currently over 40% of the foreign students of MU-Pleven are in their home countries around the world, the registered attendance and participation in lectures and exercises is over 85%. Lectures and exercises conducted in online classrooms, as well as in Zoom, Google Meet, MS Teams, are recorded and available for review. Assessment is carried out through tests integrated in the Moodle system, as well as with seminar tasks.

One of the leading lecturers in the preclinical courses “Social Medicine” and “Medical Ethics” – Prof. Dr. Silvia Alexandrova-Yankulovska, Dean of the Faculty of Public Health and Head of the Department of Public Health shares her experience of introducing training in an e-environment and the results from it: The department provides teaching in a total of 58 courses for all sectors of the university, among which are the majority of courses in the MA program “Public Health and Health Management”. Instruction in it has been distance learning since 2013 which gave us an advantage of accumulated experience to deal quickly and effectively with the new reality of learning in an electronic environment and students from other specialties of the university. The department provides Bulgarian- and English-language teaching in the courses “Social Medicine” (including an internship course in public health classes), “Medical Ethics”, “Medical Statistics” and “Information Technology” for the Medicine specialty. The e-learning and distance learning systems allow us to offer full-text teaching aids, lecture

presentations, additional documents and training resources to support theoretical training. Lectures are delivered in real time through online classrooms in the system or by videoconferencing over Zoom. The interactive lectures allow two-way communication and reviewing the material at the end of the lecture. The seminars in each course have their own specifics, but what they have in common is that they are conducted through video conferencing, complemented by self-study tasks. During exercises students discuss tasks with assistant professors, solve cases together, study software for statistical processing of scientific information, information packages, and in philosophical courses and medical ethics they discuss ethical cases from clinical practice in various medical specialties. To stimulate group work and develop students' moral reasoning skills, case studies for independent group work are set, which must be analyzed in detail following example methodology for ethical analysis. Apart from the fact that this approach seeks to build practical skills for the future work of physicians in the health system, it also allows communication between colleagues and reaching a solution as a team in the context of e-learning. The system for distance and e-learning allows for ongoing and finals review through tests. We have a positive experience in this regard with English language students too who access and take their semester tests from different parts of the world simultaneously. Our first attempt to realize an undergraduate internship in an e-environment was also successful. The internship program in social medicine is aimed at building a public health approach in future doctors and skills for working with data on the state of health of the population. In addition to interactive lectures and individual assignments in each unit, English language students had the opportunity to study and analyze their own health systems by preparing an academic essay on predefined criteria to prepare them for their work in these systems, which will they begin in a few short months. The assignment received extremely positive feedback from students. Bulgarian trainees had the opportunity to get acquainted with the main documents with which they will work in the future with the NHIF, including their powers and obligations in connection with the medical expertise of working capacity.”

*Information: V. Dukova*

On April 7 (International Health Day and a holiday of health professionals), Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of MU-Pleven, addressed the academic community: “Faced with the trial of COVID -19, our society demonstrates huge scientific potential – from doctors, teachers, scientists and specialists whose admirable actions have made them modern-day heroes. At our university, the crisis also mobilized the efforts of faculty and students – we quickly switched to online learning, many of our students volunteered to fight the epidemic, and last but not least – we built, equipped and launched the new Virology Laboratory for coronavirus research at the university.

The state of emergency imposed completely new rules in all spheres of life – self-discipline, self-denial, courage, solidarity, but also humility and patience. I am proud that the academic community, our teachers and students, have shown that unity is key, because we all strongly believe in, love and work for our common cause – Medical University - Pleven!”

Medical University - Pleven has had a Distance Learning Center since 2014. The center was built through the “Development of electronic forms of distance learning in higher education” project, Contract № BG 051 RO 001-4304-0049 “Innovative and modern education at MU-Pleven”, with a whose beneficiary – Medical University-Pleven. The project was completed in October 2014 and currently the system is in regular operation and is available to its users – lecturers and students. It is based on the Moodle platform, with MU-Pleven-specific modules that integrate into the university's administrative and information services system.

Before the state of emergency in the country was announced on 13 March 2020, the system was actively used for self-preparation by students from regulated professions, and materials for self-study were made available for 30% of the course – lectures, exercise theses, educational films and tests. In order to limit the spread of COVID-19 and with a decision at an online meeting of the Academic Council of MU-Pleven, distance learning was implemented for all courses and lecturers provided teaching materials in the portal, and additional clinical cases were developed for

## ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR IN-PERSON ENTRANCE EXAMS AT MU-PLEVEN BEGIN ON 20 JUNE

Medical University-Pleven will conduct in-person candidate student exams for the specialties "Medicine" and "Pharmacy", as well as a test in biology for bachelor's specialties. The biology exam will be held on 7 July, and the chemistry exam on 10 July. Between 20 June and 3 July, high school graduates will submit documents online through the module for prospective students in the Information System on MU-Pleven's website. Candidate students who have submitted applications for the early exams for these specialties will be redirected to participate in the regular session. Fees paid for attending the early session will be valid for the regular session. Candidates pay BGN 60 for taking the first exam and BGN 40 for each subsequent exam.

The regular date biology exam remains 21 July 2020. Candidate students who have



successfully passed the early exams for these specialties must submit an online diploma and apply for participation in the ranking between 20 June and 16 July.

A total of 472 students under government sponsorship and paid education in full-time and part-time form will begin their studies in the new 2020/2021 academic year. Medical University-Pleven offers training in a total of 16 specialties (5 master's and 11 bachelor's programs) in 5 professional fields - medicine, pharmacy, health care, public health and social activities. The master's specialties are: "Medicine" (118 spots), "Pharmacy" (49 spots), "Health Care Management", "Public Health and Health Management" and "Medical Rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy". The bachelor's specialties are: "Nurse" (70 spots), "Midwife" (21 spots); "Medical laboratory assistant" (20 spots); "X-ray laboratory assistant" (20 spots); "Assistant pharmacist" (20 spots); "Medical Rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy" (25 spots); "Protection and control of public health" (8 spots); "Social activities in healthcare" (8 spots) and "Medical cosmetics" (15 spots). There are three specialties with only full-paid training – "Social Activities" (6 spots) for a bachelor's degree, and "Public Health and Health Management" (35 spots) and "Medical Rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy" (20 spots) for a master's degree.

*Information: V. Dukova*

## MU-PLEVEN SIGNED A COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH IVAN VAZOV HIGH SCHOOL



Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of Medical University-Pleven, and Mr. Dimitar Mitev, principal of Ivan Vazov High School, signed a cooperation agreement in the field of education, research, artistic and sports activities. The two schools will partner in holding joint forums with the participation of students, pupils, teachers and lecturers, joint participation and exchange of experience in the implementation of educational projects, research activities and developments, as well as the implementation of general scientific publications, and in organizing meetings and

prepared candidate students from specialized classes, some of which rank the highest in the master's programs "Medicine" and "Pharmacy" at MU-Pleven. These students are the pride of both schools and attest to the high quality of education and training. Professor Tomov praised students and teachers from high schools in Pleven that always participate in academic events of the university – Night of Scientists, People's Day, Open Day, Night of Ideas, Festival of Medical Universities and many others.

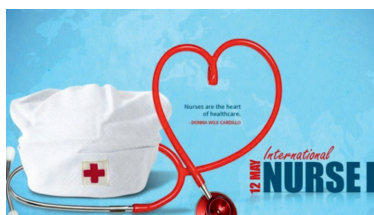
events in order to guide high school graduates to choose a bachelor's or master's degree at MU-Pleven.

Professor Tomov talked about the opportunities for visits and training at the high-tech facilities for higher education – modern laboratories in the Competence Center such as the Laboratory for Printing, Modeling and Analysis and Laboratory for Training and research in a virtual reality environment VR 360, in the experimental operating room and 3D training studio at the Telecommunication Endoscopy Center. Mr. Dimitar Mitev, the principal of Ivan Vazov High School, was confident that in the future the school will provide well-

Medical University-Pleven is a partner and cooperates with a number of high schools in the city of Pleven - Vocational School of Tourism "Aleko Konstantinov", Vocational School of Electronics and Chemical Technology "Prof. Asen Zlatarov", "Stoyan Zaimov" and "Ivan Vazov" high schools.

*Information: V. Dukova*

## THE MANAGEMENT OF SVETA MARINA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - PLEVEN CONGRATULATES NURSES ON INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY



The management of St. Marina University Hospital – Pleven congratulates nurses on the occasion of the International Nurses Day in the year when the WHO named year of International Nursing and Midwifery in an attempt to draw public attention to the importance of these professions. We all face the challenge of COVID-19, a small virus that instantaneously reordered values of world leaders, politicians and entire communities. Doctors, nurses and health professionals were on the front lines and we all recognized that the survival of our loved ones, and our future, depend on their efforts, expertise and hard work. We thank them for their professionalism, responsibility, charity and philanthropy! Be healthy, believe in your abilities, experience and opportunities!

International nurses day has been observed on 12 May since 1974 at the initiative of the International Council of Nurses (ICN). The day marks the anniversary of the birth of the first nurse, Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), an English nurse who organized a team of nurses to help the wounded during the Crimean War. It created and developed the first system for training mid-level and junior medical staff in the UK. She also wrote several books, which were later used as textbooks on health care.

*Information: V. Dukova*





## SVETA MARINA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - PLEVEN CONGRATULATES MIDWIVES ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE - 5 MAY



The management of Sveta Marina University Hospital – Pleven congratulates midwives whose calling is to greet life in their hands and to be a guiding light for every mother and her baby, and for the whole family!

The Obstetrics Clinic at Sveta Marina University Hospital – Pleven has a long history of developing, establishing, and forming traditions in offering the best health service, care, and treatment to its patients by qualified doctors, midwives, and nurses.

International Day of the Midwife is celebrated on 5 May in over 50 countries around the world. The day has been a celebration of maternity care since 1991. Midwife is a relatively new profession, marking a transition from the time when birth gradually moved from the mother's home to the hospital. The modern midwife is a medical professional with an education typical of a nurse, but with a qualification in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. Midwifery as a profession was first introduced in our country in the 19th century.

*Information: V. Dukova*



### PROF. DR. SLAVCHO TOMOV, RECTOR OF MU-PLEVEN:

#### “FOCUS” IS ONE OF THE LEADING AND MOST RELIABLE NEWS SOURCES



FOCUS News Agency is one of the leading and most reliable news sources, said Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of Medical University -

Pleven, on the 20th anniversary of FOCUS News Agency.

It is a pleasure to congratulate the team of FOCUS News Agency on its 20th anniversary and the establishing this team as one of the leaders in the media space in Bulgaria. You know that

in today's time of crisis it is very difficult to work and prove oneself, but your team has once again proven to be one of the leading and reliable sources of information, he said.

Objectivity, accuracy, impartiality are qualities that every self-respecting media must have. We were faced with a big challenge – the coronavirus, and your Agency was at the forefront to cover the most important events, the work of those who were on the front line, added Prof. Tomov.

The word is the mightiest weapon. It is very important who wields it and how. The team of FOCUS News Agency is a professionally trained team. If you allow me, in the end I will wish all of you, first to be healthy and to preserve the creative spirit and energy. Happy holiday, he concluded his wish.

Teodora Patronova,  
Focus News Agency,

<http://www.focus-news.net/news/0000/00/00/2779673>

## PROF. DR. SLAVCHO TOMOV: WE RELY ON LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW VIROLOGY LABORATORY AT MEDICAL UNIVERSITY - PLEVEN



We rely on large-scale development of the new virology laboratory at Medical University – Pleven, said Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of the university. He specified that with the investment of over BGN 320,000, a high-tech facility has been created abiding by international and European standards. Prof. Tomov pointed out three aspects for the development of the laboratory – practical, scientific and training. The university has created three spots for specialization in virology and there are already two candidates. The rector added that the head of the new laboratory – Prof. Dr. Maria Sredkova, and the vice-rector Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galya Stavreva, have prepared a research project, which will most likely produce doctoral students and doctoral dissertations. Prof. Tomov emphasized that the laboratory will work on weekends as well. Municipal hospitals will

be able to bring in samples of possible COVID-19 patients on weekends too.

The members of the regional operational headquarters for the fight against coronavirus in Pleven noted the benefits of opening a PCR laboratory at the university. The hospitals of the municipalities in the region suggested that their laboratory assistants be trained in proper sampling so as not to compromise the results.

Malin Reshovski, BTA, <http://www.bta.bg/bg/c/BO/id/2188849>

## THE COVID-19 LABORATORY IN PLEVEN HAS A MONTHS' WORTH OF TESTS

The virology laboratory at Medical University – Pleven has tests for a month ahead, said Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of the University.

In April, Medical University - Pleven opened a Virology Laboratory for COVID-19 using its own funding. Many citizens responded and continue to respond to the appeal for donations.

“Thanks to these donations, and they came in a day or two ago, we bought tests. We currently have about 1,000 available; these will ensure the work of the laboratory over the next 10 days. Pleven municipality is in a complicated situation with regards to the epidemic. Minister Kiril Ananiev, with whom we keep very close contact, made a targeted subsidy to RHI-Pleven, along with all funds that the ministry directed to RHI-Pleven will be used for the purchase of PCR tests to diagnose COVID-19. This will provide tests for almost a whole month”, noted Prof. Tomov.



## CCB DONATED A HIGH-TECH MOBILE RESPIRATOR TO SVETA MARINA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL – PLEVEN

St. Marina University Hospital - Pleven received another significant donation to deal with the coronavirus epidemic situation in the country and to provide the best treatment to its patients – a state of the art mobile respirator from the Central Cooperative Bank. The hospital management highly appreciates the noble gesture made in the fight against COVID-19, because world experience has proven that the presence of a sufficient number of respirators is a key factor in reducing mortality rates.

The mobile respirator is unique in terms of its characteristics – easily portable, mobile, safe, quick use and ideally applicable in emergencies and critical situations, regardless of where they happen – in hospitals, factories, retail outlets or when transporting patients. The mobile respirator provides invasive and non-invasive positive pressure ventilation for adult patients and young children with a minimum weight of 2.5 kg. Prof. Dr. Kamelia Tsvetanova, Head of the Clinic of Anesthesiology and Intensive Care at Sveta Marina University Hospital - Pleven, notes that the new device as unique for the region, perfectly complementing the high-tech equipment of the clinic - fibrobronchoscopy, video laryngoscopes and modern devices.

In the photo: left to right – Mr. Todor Todorov, distributor, Mr. Hristo Hristov, vice-manager of Sveta Marina University Hospital – Pleven, Mrs. Adelina Grozdeva, director of CCB – Pleven; in the middle – Prof. Dr. Kamelia Tsvetanova.

*Information: V. Dukova*



## SVETA MARINA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL – PLEVEN THANKS DONORS

St. Marina University Hospital - Pleven opened a donation account to raise funds for the fight against COVID-19. In the short time since its opening, many individuals, patients of the hospital and companies have made donations for supplies and equipment necessary to deal with the difficult and complicated epidemic situation in the country.

The management of Sveta Marina University Hospital - Pleven and Member of correspondence for the Academy of Science Prof. Dr. Grigor Gorchev, MD personally wish to express their gratitude for the donations made by:

- The President of the Constitutional Court – Mr. Boris Velchev and all constitutional judges
- Judges of the Supreme Administrative Court and other administrative judges
- Energy Market Ltd
- Borika Ltd
- The MP from the MRF – Mr. Dimitar Avramov
- The District Governor of Pleven – Mr. Miroslav Petrov

We thank our fellow citizen, the Deputy Governor of the BNB - Mr. Kalin Hristov – for his support.

We express our thanks to the many citizens, grateful patients and employees of the Hospital, whose gestures mean a lot to us.

Special thanks to the former GERB MP, Mr. Ivelin Nikolov, both for the donation he made and for his huge contribution to the organization of the donation campaign.

We thank everyone who donated funds in the name of protection and care for the life and health of doctors and patients of Sveta Marina University Hospital - Pleven!

**BE CAREFUL AND BE HEALTHY!**

**TOGETHER WE WILL OVERCOME COVID-19!**

*Information: V. Dukova*



## IMMENSE GRATITUDE TO THE DONORS FOR THE NEW VIROLOGY LABORATORY TO TEST FOR COVID-19

The management of Medical University-Pleven expresses gratitude to all public figures, organizations, companies, citizens, teachers, and workers who continue to financially support the university in this noble, socially beneficial, and scientific endeavor – construction, maintenance and operation of the newly opened Virology Research Laboratory. The Laboratory for Research of COVID-19 in Pleven is quintessential in dealing with the epidemic in the city and the region, as well as for overcoming the state of emergency in the country. Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov, Rector of the University, is sending letters of thanks to each donor, guided by the conviction that there are no small and large donors, but priceless gestures of support and solidarity.

Prof. Dr. Slavcho Tomov addressed the academic community “in the face of the COVID-19 disaster, MU-Pleven stood out with its incredible scientific potential – lecturers, scientists and experts, whose actions made them modern-day heroes. The crisis pushed Medical University-Pleven to adapt quickly to educating in an online environment, the newly opened Virological Laboratory at the University studied the coronavirus, and last but not least, many of our students volunteered to fight the epidemic.”

The newly opened Virology Laboratory at the Research Institute of Medical University-Pleven, based in the Second Clinical Base, began operation on 6 April 2020.

MU-Pleven thanks all those who donated funds to support the work of the highly specialized teams of scientists, as well as for the purchase of supplies and retrofitting the new Virology Laboratory for testing COVID-19:

1. Krasimir Karakachanov – Deputy Prime Minister for Public Order and Security and Minister of Defence
2. Dr. Kalin Popovski – MP of the 44 National Assembly
3. Petya Vasileva
4. Stanislav Lyubomirov Raikov (FifthDegree Ltd Sofia and TSS Bulgaria Ltd)
5. Member of correspondence for the Academy of Science Prof. Dr. Grigor Gorchev, MD – University Hospital – Pleven
6. Prof. Dr. Toni Vekov
7. Prov. Dr. Slavcho Tomov
8. Tsvetan Krastev – SIDI 92 Ltd Pleven
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12. Ivailo Neshev – “Nesh” sole trader – Pleven
13. Desislava Ivanova – Express Security Pleven
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16. Stefan Strnad – JS Evro – Buglaria – Sofia
17. Slavina Hristanova – agent at MTI Ltd Sofia
18. School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics “Talev” Ltd – Pleven
19. School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics “Pleven” Ltd – Pleven
20. Independent syndicate at MU-Pleven
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22. Prof. Dr. Asparuh Asparuhov
23. Prof. Angelina Stoyanova
24. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zdravka Radionova
25. Prof. Dr. Tashko Deliyski
26. Assoc. Prof. Dobromir Dimitrov
27. Ibrahim Poturliiev
28. Oleg Karadzhov
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33. Assoc. Prof. Milena Atanasova Atanasova-Radeva
34. Silvia Evgenieva Ivanova
35. Nino Del Pozzo
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58. Lions Club Pleven Miziya
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