

Different Aspects of Polish – Ukrainian Medical Cooperation

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Our cooperation with colleagues from Ukraine has developed and still develops on many levels and concerns especially the field of paediatric cardiology. Our department is mostly involved in the diagnostics and trans catheter treatment of congenital heart defects (CHD), both in children and adults.

We had the great opportunity to host the following Ukrainian paediatric cardiologists: Bohdan Cherpak (2007 and 2010; works in Kiev), Slava Volodin (2007, 2009 and 2014; works in Kharkiv), Nataliia Yashchuk (2015, works in Kiev) and Iryna Avramanienko (2019, works in Lviv). The trainings lasted from one to six months and were covered by our Foundation of the Friends of Children with Heart Diseases in Zabrze. The knowledge of all the trainees was very good, therefore, the primary goal of the fellowship was to improve skills in the interventional cardiology.

The secondary goal was to give the trainees the opportunity to participate in various scientific conferences, both national and international, during which they presented also our joint research abstracts [1,2]. They participated in analysis of various cardiological issues, among others the results of trans catheter closure of ruptured sinus of Valsalva (RSVA). RSVA is a rare phenomenon which affects mostly Asian males (Japan, China, India), but also is considerably frequent in Poland and Ukraine. Our together experience was summarized and published in a well-known Japan journal [3]. The cooperation resulted also in publication about trans catheter closure of recanalized patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) after surgical ligation [4] as well as publication about innovative method of systemic-to-pulmonary shunt diameter reduction with use of multiple stents [5].

We have repeatedly sent and continue to send equipment for the

needs of Ukrainian patients (to the Amosov Institute in Kiev). In 2014 our Foundation sent a donation to Kiev, namely four cardiac monitors with central station. Moreover, we handed drugs which are unavailable in Ukraine (eg. Amrinone injections for intensive care use).

We (me with prof. Malgorzata Szkutnik) systematically visited Ukrainian friends and participated in interventional cardiology workshops in CHD in Donetsk (2011), Kiev (2012) as well as in cardiology congresses in Kiev (2015, 2016 and 2018).

In the early 2000s I was honoured to participate in the conferences and workshops in Moscow, which were attended by outstanding cardiologists from around the world.

The day after the catastrophe of airplane in Russia in Smolensk, in which the President of Poland and 96 most important officials in the country died (April 11th, 2010), I wrote to all Russian colleagues e-mail addresses that I knew that I was shocked by the tragedy in Smolensk and that I suspend my further cooperation with the Russians until the reason of the catastrophe is clarified.

After 10 years (April 2020) I repeated the e-mail with similar content to the same addressees (the causes of this tragedy have not been clarified to this day, and the remnants of the plane and the "black boxes" are still being investigated by the Russians). One Russian colleague replied that he believed that Poland was the most free country in Europe and asked if I was any wiser. I am not.

My letter was published in Ukrainian language on web side page of Amosov Institute of Cardiovascular Surgery in Kiev.

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