

Successful start to major deal

Belarusian surgeons develop unique treatment for those with digestive problems

By Kristina Kurilenko

They were the first in the world to use laparoscopy to restore the function of the stomach, avoiding open surgery on those whose food fails to reach the duodenum, causing the stomach to drop towards the small pelvis. Such invasive surgery in the abdominal cavity results in a long recovery time and leaves patients partially disabled, having lost part of their stomach.

The laparoscopy was developed by a professor of the Surgical Department of BelMAPO, Igor Grishin. He tells us, "While studying how best to treat peptic ulcers, we inevitably encounter this rare pathology which few know how to

treat. Young women are most likely to suffer from this disease, which causes vomiting; they often start seeing a psychiatrist, despite their problem being physical." He explains that the key-hole surgery allows patients to retain their stomach function: a clear advantage.

Operations have been successful on two patients so far, with the procedure lasting about two and a half hours. By the evening, the girls could walk and, by the next morning, they could eat. The Head of Surgical Department #1 at Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital, Dmitry Chepik, tells us that those suffering with the disease are taken to hospital in a very serious condition. "Their nutritional disorder leads



Endoscopy department doctors adjust equipment

to weight loss, which leads to loss of strength and, even, social adaptation. Many lose their jobs and families, as they end up having a nervous breakdown. They appear with serious mental and physical

exhaustion, as well as a digestive disorder. Those 165-175cm tall can weigh as little as 38-42 kg," Mr. Chepik notes.

The operation is free of charge, performed exclusively at the Minsk

Regional Clinical Hospital. Anyone believing they are suffering from this problem should make themselves known either to the hospital or to the Medical Advisory Centre of BelMAPO.

Becoming symbol of latest achievements

Belarus presents goods at EXPO-2015 in Italian Milan

Belinterexpo, of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, is co-ordinating interaction with EXPO-2015 organisers (in line with the plan of events for the national exposition).

The World EXPO is an international fair celebrating industrialisation and is an open platform for technological achievements. The first such fair took place in Hyde

Park, London, at the initiative of Prince Albert, in the 19th century. At the time, its major sight was the Crystal Palace, constructed by Joseph Paxton from iron and glass.

EXPO-2012 was held in South Korea, while Italian Milan has the honour in 2015 and Kazakh Astana in 2017. Ayutthaya (Thailand), Dubai (UAE), Izmir (Turkey), San Paulo (Brazil) and Yekaterinburg (Russia) will compete for the right to host the exhibition in 2020.

Experiment with MultiPads launched

By Irina Popova

Belarusian Pedagogical University launching use of tablets



Future teachers of chemistry and biology, and their professors, are taking part in a pilot project using MultiPads to replace textbooks, notebooks and, even, the library.

The professors have received special training in using the technology.

Meeting students and professors, Gennady Palchik, the Director of Belarus' National Institute of Education, noted that the education system needs to enter the new millennium using the latest IT.

"Professors should master some electronic devices and be able to teach with their help; only then will knowledge be fully applied in the modern world," he said.

Foreign educational institutions have already gained positive experience of using such tablet devices in teaching young professionals. Assessments have been made showing the superiority of digital training over traditional methods. The university is encouraging its staff to use international experience, adapted to suit local conditions and incorporating their ideas.

West Polesie included in World Network

UNESCO makes Transboundary Biosphere Reserve of West Polesie part of World Network of Biosphere Reserves

The Transboundary Biosphere Reserve comprises Pribuzhskoye Polesie (Belarus), West Polesie (Poland) and Shatsky (Ukraine). Its certificate was presented at the conference on protecting and ensuring the sustainable development of Polesie region, hosted by Poland. A delegation from the Ministry of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus took part, alongside environmental authorities from Poland and Ukraine and the Secretariat of the UNESCO *Man and the Biosphere* Programme.

An agreement between the governments of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine to establish a trilateral biosphere reserve of West Polesie was signed in 2011. At the 24th session of the International Co-ordinating Council of the UNESCO *Man and the Biosphere* Programme, held in July in Paris, a nominating application was presented on its inclusion in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and was approved.

Tatiana Trafimovich, of the Land and Landscape Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, tells us that certification shows a desire to implement UNESCO policy regarding the conservation of natural areas. It also recognises Belarus' efforts to promote the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.



Ecologists to protect West Polesie area

The West Polesie trilateral biosphere is the largest in Central and Eastern Europe, protecting forests covering 200,000 hectares. Most are upland Polesie forests, which have experienced anthropogenic transformation over the years. Forest ecosystems are seeing a high degree of natural recovery, with high potential for biological diversity; some species are found only in this region, which is a trans-boundary ecological corridor for European ecology.

The World Network of Biosphere Reserves is part of the

UNESCO *Man and the Biosphere* Programme, protecting areas which have a delicate balance between man and nature, while promoting sustainable environmental development. The international network aims to drive forward the exchange of knowledge and experience, via educational and research programmes, while monitoring and implementing joint decisions. Currently, there are 598 biosphere reserves across 117 countries, including many international or cross-border reserves — such as the West Polesie tripartite biosphere reserve.