

# Replacing paper records

Electronic medical records introduced for Belarus' healthcare system

By Olga Shvaiko

The Head of the Health Ministry's Department for Medical Statistics, Information Technologies and Office Work, Boris Androsyuk, tells us that we'll be able to move completely to electronic data storage within three years.

Medical records will note a patient's sex, age, passport information, diseases, vaccinations and the results of tests. "In future, patients will be able to address a polyclinic registration board; on giving their passport number, their records will appear on the doctor's monitor," notes Mr. Androsyuk. However, much time and funding is needed to introduce the technology countrywide.

Full electronic clinical records are being launched in hospitals, including data on treatments being administered, allergies, names of doctors and test results.

The Republican Re-



Computer processing of data more commonly used by medical staff

search Centre for Paediatric Oncology and Haematology is a good example of the new system, with medical records containing X-ray

results and computer tomography. These enable doctors to discuss patients during videoconferences.

"We plan to gradually

launch electronic medical records countrywide. At present, it's only operational in a few healthcare institutions," notes Mr. Androsyuk.

He stresses that data is protected, ensuring privacy for patients. Only their attending doctors will have viewing permission.

## Long-livers lead the way

Four women over 115 years old registered among Belarus' centenarians

The title of Belarus' oldest resident belongs to Anna Pavlovna Ragel from Molodechno, who was born on July 4th, 1889. Adelya Ivanovna Barkovskaya, currently residing in the Tolochin district of the Vitebsk region, was born in 1893. Last year, Maria Mikhailovna Shikut (from the Stolbsty district in the Minsk region) and Klavdia Alexeevna Yakimovich (from Minsk) celebrated their 115th birthdays.

According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 577 Belarusian residents have passed their 100th birthday, as of January 1st, 2010. Traditionally, the Grodno region leads among the country's regions, with 147 people aged over 100 years. The Minsk region is ranked second in this unusual rating, with 96 people reaching their century, followed by the Brest region with 84 people. 71 people have celebrated their 100th birthday in the Gomel region and the Vitebsk region boasts just 69. Minsk and the Mogilev region have 57 centenarians each.

## Innovations come to the fore

By Yulia Vaneeva

### Belarusian-Syrian Sci-Tech Co-operation Centre opens in Minsk

The Belarusian National Technical University now has its own Centre of Belarusian-Syrian Sci-Tech Co-operation, notes the Deputy Education Minister, Kazimir Farino. He believes the Centre will foster contacts between educational establishments and encourage innovation and technology exchange. This should facilitate the commercial application of scientific research, while attracting foreign investments and technologies to create science-intensive products. The

ultimate aim is to secure sustainable development for our economies.

Branches of the Centre will operate in Belarus and Syria, helping scientific organisations and manufacturers to advertise their activities, products and scientific and innovative developments. "We'll be creating an electronic database of innovation projects of mutual interest, while sharing information on such projects and using the Internet to promote our work," explains Mr. Farino.

The Centre is to study scientific and science-intensive markets, while analysing legislation relating to the sci-tech and

educational spheres, as well as international trade. Consulting services will be available to individuals and firms alike regarding contracts, license agreements and the setting up of joint innovation bodies and companies.

Two direct educational agreements have been signed: between the Belarusian National Technical University (BNTU) and the Al-Baath University (city of Hims); and between the BNTU and the University of Damascus. Negotiations are in progress to extend the term of these agreements and amend them, allowing the BNTU to train energy industry specialists and road and bridge construction specialists for Syria.



Wedding couples enjoy tradition of sending doves flying

## Wedded bliss as number of marriages steadily increases

In 2009, 78,800 marriages were registered in Belarus — 1,600 more than in 2008

By Yelena Prusova

According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection's Main Department for Employment Policy and Population, all the republic's regions are seeing increasing numbers of weddings — in urban and rural areas. Moreover, urbanities are demonstrating even greater activity. 11.4 percent more marriages were registered in 2009 in cities, against 7.8 percent in villages. However, the number of marriages among urban residents of the Vitebsk and Mogilev regions has fallen. In 2009, Mendelssohn's march was played 0.2 percent and 0.4 percent (respectively) less frequently than in the previous year.

According to specialists, this

year, the number of marriages in Belarus will rise, looking at 2008-2009 trends and favourable demographic tendencies. The number of potential brides and bridegrooms is rising countrywide, looking at their marriageable age. Additionally, 2010 isn't a leap year, which usually sees fewer marriages.

Alongside increasing numbers of marriages, Belarus is seeing divorce figures fall — a no less important trend. 2008 saw 36,700 divorces, against 35,100 in 2009 (down 4.4 percent). Unfortunately, rural areas in the Minsk and Grodno regions have seen their number of divorces rise (by 4.8 and 2.4 percent respectively). Remaining cities and villages boast quite optimistic marriage trends and longer lasting marriages.

## Discounts help attract more customers

By Andrey Asfura

### Owners of Minsk Visitor Card number over 100,000

Belarusians and foreigners alike are using their discount cards, which offer savings of 5-20 percent at sites countrywide. Shops, hotels, restaurants, clubs and car service stations are participating, with hotels in Riga and Vilnius recently joining the scheme.

The programme embraces over 140 firms, including banks, fuel



Minsk Visitor Card brings shopping discounts

stations, hotels and tourist operators. "Each month, the number of participants is growing, with participants in Minsk and beyond," notes the Advisor of the International Belarus-Lithuania Committee, Valery Kozel. So far, 340 places accept the card in Belarus.

The plastic Minsk Visitor Card costs \$2.50 to Belarusians but is offered free to visitors to the country, being paid for by the card issuer. "Companies are increasing their turnover and volumes of paid services by participating in the programme," Mr. Kozel says.