

LIVED EXPERIENCE ARTICLE FROM A WOMAN WORKING IN HYPERTENSION RESEARCH: UKRAINE

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WHERE ARE YOU LOCATED NOW AND HOW IS YOUR PERSONAL SITUATION?

Now, my daughter and I are in Poland (in Gdansk). In early March, after military attacks on my country and my hometown Kharkiv, I decided that the only option to save my child was evacuation. So my daughter and I came to Poland.

It is no coincidence that we came to Gdansk, since from July 2017 to July 2018 I was a Post-doc at the Clinic of Hypertension and Diabetology at the Medical University of Gdańsk, and I still have the brightest memories of the year of work spent under the guidance of Professor Narkiewicz. From the first day of the war, Professor Narkiewicz and his colleagues have provided great support to my family. I remember with gratitude how, hiding from the bombing, I received daily messages from Professor Narkiewicz and clinic staff. In those terrible days, I felt that they were worried about me and were trying in every possible way to help. This support has been very valuable to me.

Thanks to the help of Professor Narkiewicz and the leadership of the Medical University of Gdańsk, I have found a job where I can continue to engage in scientific activities, conduct classes with students and, hopefully, soon begin a full-fledged clinical practice at the University Clinic.



WHAT IS THE SITUATION REGARDING MEDICAL CARE, WHERE YOU ARE?

Since now I am in Poland, first of all I would like to start with medical care here. The fact is that Poland has become a country that since the beginning of the war has taken under its protection the largest number of Ukrainians (approximately three millions). All citizens of Ukraine who arrived in Poland after February 24, 2022 (the day the war began) have the opportunity to receive free medical care. This is undoubtedly very valuable.

As for my native city Kharkiv, since the beginning of the war, part of the medical institutions were damaged to one degree or another and could not provide medical care to patients. Especially in the first weeks of the war, there was a huge problem with the lack of vital medicines and access to medical care. Many medical institutions on social networks have provided access to the phones of doctors of various specialties, so that, if necessary, patients could access online consultations.

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Some doctors, along with their families, were forced to settle in hospitals, and they continued to provide medical care.

At the moment, thanks to well-established logistics, the help of volunteers and aid organisations, the situation with the delivery and access of necessary medicines has improved significantly. Those medical institutions that were forced to close due to bombing and destruction are gradually returning to their work. However, it is unclear how long it will take to resume the work of clinics and the access of all patients to the necessary medical care.

HOW IS THE SITUATION SPECIFICALLY REGARDING CARDIOVASCULAR EMERGENCIES?

As for the situation regarding cardiovascular emergencies, in Kharkiv, even in the most difficult days of the war, emergency care was provided to patients. Ambulances, even in times of bombardment, left to provide emergency assistance. Kharkiv City Clinical Hospital of Ambulance and Emergency Care did not stop its work for a minute, as well as the Regional Clinical Hospital, which is also involved in the provision of emergency care to patients with cardiovascular pathology, continued its work. Unfortunately, it is too early to talk about the resumption of emergency care in full, and this especially applies to Eastern parts of the country and frontline areas.

We really hope that soon people in my country will be able to return to a normal life, including access to health care.

