

St. PETERSBURG DECLARATION ON THERMAL MEDICINE

23rd-24th April 2013

The constitutional obligation of the government is to take care of public health. One of the important and underestimated means leading to the improvement of public health is thermal medicine.

During the Conference “*The modern medicine of wellness: problems, solutions, perspectives*”, which was held on 23rd-24th April 2013 at the “Belye Nochi” Health Resort and Spa, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Chair of Medicine of Wellness and Physiotherapy at the Kirov Military Medical Academy and the 25th anniversary of the “Belye Nochi” and organized by Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation North-West division of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, Legislative Assembly of the Russian Federation, Public Health Committee of St. Petersburg under the auspice of the World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy (FEMTEC), the expert speakers and participants, including medical thermal specialists and researchers accepted the definition of thermal medicine which had been stated before by an international body:

THERMAL MEDICINE IS “an organized system of providing health benefits to patients in health resorts by using mainly natural therapeutic resources, climatic properties and education to treatment the patients and to promote healthy lifestyle, prevention and rehabilitation.

The members of the Congress in St. Petersburg are very uneasy for the gradual elimination of balneology and thermal medicine from health resorts in many countries. Thermal medicine is replaced by tourist activities.

On the other hand, it is known that modern population demand for thermal medicine is growing. The reason of those facts are that:

- society is getting older
- health awareness is rising
- the number of people who suffer from modern-age diseases is growing

According to our knowledge, the situation of thermal medicine in different countries are varies, but the general tendency is to reduce medical activity.

We would like to appeal to governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, insurance institutions and societies, concerned with thermal medicine to take the following actions:

1) to include thermal medicine into health care system in the countries in which it is has not been done yet; to recognize thermal medicine as the integral part of health care

2) to recognize by governments the fact that thermal medicine as a separate field of knowledge requiring pre- and post-graduate education, taking into consideration the fact that a balneological section was created in the EU (EUSMA) and by FEMTEC and FoRST in collaboration with WHO (project Hydroglobe, www.femteconline.org)

3) to provide financial conditions in order to conduct research in balneology, including the research justifying cost-effective economy

4) to spread and develop the knowledge on the meaning and the role of thermal medicine into the public space.

According to the aforementioned points we hereby declare that THERMAL MEDICINE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HEALTH SYSTEMS AS A RIGHT FOR ITS CITIZENS TO ACCESS THIS MODALITY OF CURE WHERE THERE ARE MEDICAL INDICATIONS FOR THEM

Finally it was decided to create an **International Observatory** that could gather all the institution and organizations interested and dedicated to thermal medicine and medical hydrology that could implement all these perspectives so that may develop scientific knowledge and better access of the population for these benefits.

Signed by :

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Pr. Umberto Solimene, Secretary General of World Federation Hydrotheraopy and Climatotherapy (FEMTEC), Italy

Pr. Pedro Cantista, Professor of Medical Hydrology, Specialist Doctor in Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PRM), President of the Portuguese Society of Medical Hydrology, Portugal

Pr. Olga Surdu, V.President FEMTEC, Assoc. Prof. Ovidius University Constanta, Balneal and Rehabilitation Sanatorium Techirghiol Romania, Member in Board of Romanian Society of Rehabilitation, Physical Medicine and Balneology

Pr. Irena Ponikowska President of Polish Association of Medical Hydrology (Warsaw) Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun, Collegium Medicum in Bydgoszcz, Department of Balneology and Physical Medicine (Ciechocinek), Poland

Pr. Gennady Ponomarenko, Chief of the Medical Rehabilitation, Ministry of Defence, Russian Federation, Russia

Dr. Thierry Dubois, President of the French Thermal Association, France

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