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Bulgarian Association for Prevention and Infection Control (BAPIC) “BulNoso”

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Bulgarian Association for Prevention and Infection Control (BAPIC) “BulNoso” was established as NGO in 2003 with the substantial support of Bulgarian-Swiss Hospital Hygiene Programme-BSHHP (bilateral collaborative initiative of Bulgarian Ministry of Health and Swiss Agency for development and international collaboration).

In the same year BulNoso joined IFIC as a Member society and since then has become part of many basic activities of IFIC: our specialists attended annual congresses and published articles in IJIC. As of 2015, BulNoso membership shows an upward trend: from 13 founders up to 594 individual members and 35 corporate members (hospitals).

The main purpose of BulNoso is to provide information on European standards and innovations in the Infection Control (IC) for a wide range of specialists in clinical and preventive medicine aiming to support their professional development and practice in this field of medicine. The major BulNoso instruments for its information and training purposes are: the Scientific Journal Bulletin “Nosocomial Infections”, the renewed website www.bulnoso.org, the National Forum with international participation and the educational regional seminars started in 2009 and further developed to become BulNoso Academy. Traditionally, the main topics of the HAI surveillance with its epidemiological, etiological and clinical aspects, as well as the implementation of complex interventions to prevent the healthcare-associated infections have been discussed in the different sections of the Bulletin and during the working sessions of the congress. In parallel, a company's exhibition has been arranged to illustrate recent advances in products and technologies for improvement of hospital hygiene, disinfection and sterilization. A total of 7 National Symposia on Nosocomial Infections (NI) and Disinfection have been organized up to 2009 and since 2010 a National Congress on NI was held biannually - 8th Congress in 2010, 9th Congress in 2012 and 10th Congress in 2014, when the 10-year anniversary of BSHHP was celebrated.

BulNoso continued to support the WHO Initiative „Global Patient Safety Challenge” by focusing on different aspects of hand hygiene and compliance with the best hygiene standards in healthcare as a means of quality assurance in hospitals and other healthcare facilities. BulNoso has a definitive contribution to:

- The official pledge of commitment of Bulgaria to the initiative, and
- Communication of Patient Safety Challenge “*Clean Care is Safer Care*” among the Bulgarian specialists: surgeons, neonatologists, epidemiologists and microbiologists during their national forums in 2006 - 2007.

In 2009 a new activity was initiated – an educational seminar held on regional basis with the subject: “*Patient safety and protection of the personnel from NI (HAI)*”. The idea of BulNoso experts was to work closer with the hospitals and to spread the core knowledge achieved

within BSHHP through a series of educational seminars hosted by different regional hospitals throughout the country.

The traditionally organised Round tables during the Congresses discuss different topics. For example: “BSHHP - What have we succeeded to change”. With the specialists trained during the Bulgarian-Swees Hospital Hygiene Programme we discussed the changes in the way of thinking and IC practice at all levels.

In 2014, the scientific programme was focused on the 2nd National Seminar of the BULNOSO ACADEMY, aimed at training in HAIs prevention at intensive care units and sharp injuries prevention in the hospital and healthcare sector (Directive 2010/32/ EU), and the ROUND TABLE: “The Bundles: to transfer science into practice”. With participation of leading clinical specialists we discussed the necessity of changes in nosocomial infection prevention rationale and practices in the context of the National Standards. Final Agreement on the National HAI Prevention Standard and The Bundles implementation in Clinical Practice was signed between BulNoso and National Societies of Surgeons, Urologists, Neonatology specialists, ICU specialists, BOTA (Bulgarian Association of Orthopedic and Traumatology) etc. The Congress was hosted by one of the BSHHP Model Hospitals, University Hospital “St. Anna”- Sofia, an example of successful combining the best traditions with the progress in introduction of the European healthcare standards.

Among the last international activities it is important to mention that BulNoso started and coordinated:

- The Second National Hand Hygiene Campaign 2015-2017, “Save Lives :Clean your hands” national activities, Safe Surgery Save lives programme initiatives;
- Participation of Bulgarian hospitals in the ESCMID Staffing Survey for Infectious Diseases, Clinical Microbiology and Infection Control in hospitals.
- Translated and published on the IFIC website The IFIC Book “Basic Concepts in IP&C” into Bulgarian Language

We believe in our fruitful cooperation within EUNETIPS.