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Rezumat: Interview with rector Emil Ceban about the particularities of higher medical education in the Republic of Moldova, doctor of medical sciences.

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Quality, Excellence, Performance - values that identify USMF "Nicolae Testemițanu" today



I discussed the particularities of higher medical education in the Republic of Moldova with the rector of the "Nicolae Testemițanu" State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, university professor Emil Ceban, doctor of medical sciences.

- Dear Mr. Rector, the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemițanu" from the Republic of Moldova represents a prestigious institution of higher education with a history of almost 77 years. How do you describe the institution you have the honor of managing?

- The academic performance, professionalism, responsibility and dedication of the scientific and teaching staff, the creativity of the researchers, the diligence and enthusiasm of the medical professionals, the high training and professional affirmation of the University graduates and, last but not least, the human value of the entire university community is what distinguishes us on the market educational. In the 77 years of activity, we have been guided by traditions and values, which have contributed to the achievement of the main mission - to offer high-performance services in education, research, medical assistance and professional training throughout life in the field of medicine and pharmaceuticals, under the conditions of internationalization and globalization. Currently, 5700 students from the Republic of Moldova and 35 other countries are studying at our university. The environment in which future specialists in medicine and pharmacy study, the quality of teaching-learning-evaluation, research excellence, the University's worldwide reputation, collaborative relations with external partners, academic mobility, the favorable reputation of teachers and researchers, internationalization and access to a wide spectrum of medical and pharmaceutical informational resources constitute indisputable advantages that position the University among the top rated higher education institutions in the country. Currently, the institution responds promptly to the needs of society and quickly adapts to the modern requirements of medical and pharmaceutical training, such that our graduates, being employed in the domestic and international health system,

- The month of July is usually the time when high school graduates or colleges choose their professional future. What educational offer have you prepared this year for those who aspire to become students of the "Nicolae Testemițanu" State University of Medicine and Pharmacy?

- We are always concerned with the development of the educational offer in relation to the requirements of society and the national health system. In the last five years, the University has developed and launched four undergraduate degree programs – *Optometry, General Nursing, Public Health, Technological Radiology*, and one Master of Science – *Molecular Technologies in Health*. This year we come with a new bachelor's degree program - *Physiotherapist and rehabilitation* and three master's programs: *Human Nutrition, Clinical Optometry and Public Mental Health*. Of course, the educational offer also includes the well-known integrated higher education programs: *Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy*.

I emphasize that all study programs are accredited and authorized at the national level by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research, and the study programs in Dentistry are also accredited by the Dental Board of California. At the same time, the University is internationally accredited according to the standards of the World Federation of Medical Education.

The decision to develop a career in the medical or pharmaceutical field may not be an easy one, but it certainly brings a lot of satisfaction. We are certain that determined, intelligent, strong and empathetic young people choose to study one of the medical specialties at USMF "Nicolae Testemițanu".

- How attractive are study programs in Medicine or Pharmacy for young people?

- Last year we had almost double the request from young people, compared to the number of places launched in the competition. This proves to us that the professions of doctor and pharmacist continue to be appreciated and much sought after, and not even the pandemic caused by the new type of coronavirus has deterred them from wanting a career in these fields.

We found that the best high school graduates and medical colleges come to our university, who during their years of study manage to record academic and scientific achievements and get involved in volunteering and social responsibility activities. The University of Medicine is also famous for the fact that here you learn a lot and in depth, and once you put on the white coat, you realize the assumed responsibility and the volume of knowledge necessary to become a doctor or an erudite pharmacist. That is why those who choose Medicine, Dentistry or Pharmacy are aware from the start that their professional choice requires a lot of work, sacrifice, dedication and sleepless nights. The result of the efforts of the years of study is reflected not only in the grades received in exams, colloquiums or theses. *The big exam is held in front of and at the patient's bed!*

– What study and living conditions does the University offer students?

– Students benefit from modern study and research conditions: classrooms and halls equipped with high-performance equipment, modernly equipped research laboratories. The medical training process is carried out in four languages: Romanian, Russian, English and French. At the University Center for Simulation in Medical Training, we apply modern methods of training medical specialists, where, starting from the second year of studies, students acquire communication skills with patients and develop correct medical skills with the help of standardized patients and high-fidelity simulators.

In the last two years we have been implementing the concept of *education through research*, we have created the National Institute for Research in Medicine and Health for the development of a modern infrastructure for scientific activity, in accordance with the Strategic Plan for the Development of Universities in the period 2021-2030 and the Strategy for Strengthening the Research Field and innovation.

The practical activity of doctors is carried out in 95 university clinics, located in republican and municipal medical institutions. Dentistry students develop their professional skills in two ultra-modern university dental clinics, Pharmacy students train their skills at the "Vasile Procopișin" University Pharmaceutical Center and the Scientific-Practical Center in the Field of Medicinal Plants, where future pharmacists complete their practical internships.

We offer study beneficiaries a library rich in medical and pharmaceutical information resources, over 2000 accommodation places in dormitories, canteens, two sports complexes and an outdoor sports field, recreation areas, etc. At our university, students can achieve their most daring academic ambitions, benefiting from training courses with a wide range of topics, held by renowned professors from abroad, academic mobility in specialized institutions abroad, study or research grants, programs international with external funding, etc. The advantage is twofold: the comfort of learning at home, near your loved ones, and doing European quality studies and possibilities to study and exchange experience outside the country for a certain period of time.

I emphasize that the University is in the process of continuous development and modernization of the technical-material base, thus we manage to improve the conditions of studies and research, to create perspectives of professional and personal development for students and other categories of beneficiaries, etc.

- List some strengths that would convince young people to opt for USMF "Nicolae Testemițanu".

- Starting from the idea that the most effective investment is in education, I reiterate that the specialty in which young people will invest today, will bring them fulfillment and satisfaction tomorrow. Our university holds the certificate of institutional accreditation according to the standards of the World Federation of Medical Education, the "Excellence of human resources in research" logo, the quality certificate according to ISO 9001:2015, which confirms the quality of studies and research activity, but also of all the processes carried out in within the University. Graduates of USMF "Nicolae Testemițanu" work in prominent institutions around the world, asserting themselves as competent specialists and honorably promoting the name of our institution. The prestige of these professions speaks of the noble mission commitment to take care of people's health, to provide qualified medical assistance, to relieve human pain and suffering, to improve people's quality of life. And the phrase of gratitude *Thank you doctor!* it is the most vibrant and satisfying and fulfilling for us doctors!