

10.12.2007

Dear Sirs,

With regards to the STOP Cervical Cancer Petition in Europe, it is a pleasure to announce that Republic of Macedonia has put the cervical cancer prevention in its agenda of the priority public-health problems, measures and activities...

The Government of Republic of Macedonia in the previous two years has given strong political and financial support for enacting a special prevention program for early diagnostics of malign neoplasm of the reproductive system of the women.

Within this program special attention is given to the cervical cancer prevention, through a program of PAP-test screening, aimed at the 20% of the women aged 19-65, who do not have the personal health insurance. This is supported with printing of promotion material, and establishment of a register for screening in the Gynecology Clinic, Clinical Center, Skopje.

The women who do possess the state health insurance have a right of one PAP-test annually, conducted with their primary health care gynecologist, as a part of their basic package. In this way, the sustainability of the process of early detection of the cervical cancer would be ensured.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia, through cooperation with the Macedonian Women's Lobby and the parliamentary Equal Opportunities commission, since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007, launched a campaign for free preventive check-ups, targeted at approximately 20.000 women aged 15 over, disregarding their health insurance status. Within the framework of this campaign, apart of the PAP-tests, educational seminars are held, aimed at awareness raising for the importance of the prevention process, as well as spreading the practical information. The campaign raises great interest until now and 12.000 PAP-tests are already conducted. It is envisaged that the number of 20.000 will be reached until end of December.

We'd also like to stress out that in the cervical cancer prevention program, many NGO's, patient support groups and volunteers are actively involved.

Republic of Macedonia is willing to share its experiences with other interested countries in Europe, but also supports other initiatives for development of new screening methods and for vaccination against HPV.