

REPORT ON HEARING SCREENING PILOT STUDY IN KYRGYZSTAN, 30 JANUARY – 3 FEBRUARY 2013

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Between 30 January and 3 February 2013 a team from the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing started a hearing screening program in Kyrgyzstan, performing tests in school-age children in Bishkek. The team also took part in a conference organized by the National Center for Mother and Child in Bishkek.

Hearing screening was performed according to methodology used in Poland during different programs. The hearing screening occupied two days during which 300 children were examined. 15% positive results was obtained (45 children) – mainly mild to moderate unilateral or bilateral hearing losses, but also a few severe high frequency hearing losses and one case of single-sided deafness. In none of these cases were parents or teachers working with them aware of their hearing problems. The group for the study was randomized without exclusion criteria. All children which attended to school that day were screened.

After the screening, on 2 February, a Polish–Kyrgyz–Belarusian conference took place in the National Center for Mother and Child in Bishkek. The focus was on otorhinolaryngology, audiology, and telemedicine, and the conference was opened by Prof. Kamchibek Askarbekovich Uzakbaev, the director of the National Center for Mother and Child. The program included eight lectures, of which five were presented by specialists from the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing.

Piotr Skarzynski gave a lecture on hearing loss treatment with cochlear implants, in particular the achievements of the Institute in partial deafness treatment. In the following



lecture Agnieszka Majchrzak gave further information on cochlear implants, including post-operative care of implanted patients and procedures for cochlear implant fitting. Afterwards, Irina Pierzynska outlined achievements of the Institute in using telemedicine for medical consulting, cochlear implant fitting, and rehabilitation of patients, and Romak Barylyak talked about the treatment of otosclerosis. At the end, Piotr Skarzynski gave preliminary results of the Bishkek hearing screening. As well as overall numbers, examples of individual cases were discussed.

The school-age hearing screening program started by the Institute of Physiology and Pathology on Hearing in Central Asia has already been successfully applied in Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In Bishkek, the program, as well as the lectures accompanying the visit, was met with great interest by the Kyrgyz specialists. The Institute's team has been invited to continue its hearing screening program in other regions of Kyrgyzstan. There is high need for development of dedicated versions to each language. Cooperation with local team is always recommended.