

Eager to share the unique May Newsletter with two uplifting reflections. The first is from a recent observer, Dr. Tetiana Pavlishevska, who had the opportunity to combine several personal and professional passions while studying in Boston. The second includes insights from one of our dedicated, highly respected mentors, Dr. Andrew Liteplo. An interview with Andrew reveals why he devotes time to helping train Ukrainian clinicians, tips for maximizing the experience for mentors and mentees alike, and a special shout out to Dr. Vadym Vus. Enjoy the read!



HEAL UKRAINE GROUP

In Collaboration
with:



As the war in Ukraine continues to rage, we remain steadfast at HUG, along with our partners, to address the acute and ongoing healthcare needs of the country. The will, determination, and fortitude of the Ukrainian people, along with their spirit and commitment, inspire us as a collaborative team. Ukrainians are fighting on behalf of all of us who believe in civil liberties, self-determination, and democracy. Together, we work to counter the deliberate destruction of healthcare infrastructure and personnel, caused by the Russian Army, via help for Ukrainian clinicians and medical facilities to both stabilize the current medical response and plan for the future. We accomplish this through supplying medical aid and, more sustainably, through provision of educational and training opportunities for Ukrainian physicians.

*Please find updates about the Heal Ukraine Group programs and efforts below.
The faces of Ukrainian patients and healthcare workers may be blurred to protect their identities during this time of war.*

Cohort of Ukrainian Physicians Observe Surgical Techniques and Burn Treatment at Massachusetts General Hospital, Shriners Children Boston, and Brigham and Women's Hospital

In March, the VIC-HUG-SAR-GMKA team hosted a cohort of burn surgeons from Lviv, Dr. Halyna Saian and Dr. Anna Lopachuk, as well as Dr. Markiian Nozdrin, the top scorer from a Principles of Surgery course taught by [GMKA experts](#). While in Boston, each of these physicians shadowed specialists from the Surgery Departments of Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Shriners Children Boston. Anna and Halyna enjoyed some time-off with a brief trip to Manhattan, while Markiian reconnected with family who visited from Toronto -- a joyous reunion since they had not seen one another in several years. On March 17th the cohort and their hosts shared a meal together with mentors and leaders from the VIC-HUG-SAR-GMKA program.



Pictured above is Claire Barker, Dr. Markiian Nozdrin, Connie and John Adkins, Dr. Anna Lopachuk, Dr. Jacki Hart (Leader of the VIC HUG SAR observership program), Dr. Halyna Saian, and Renata Selig.



Pictured above is Dr. Anna Lopachuk, Dr. Halyna Saian, Connie Adkins, Renata Selig, John Adkins, Dr. Serguei Melnitchouk (Leader of the VIC HUG SAR GMKA observership program), Dr. Jacki Hart (Leader of the VIC HUG SAR GMKA observership program), Robyn Steinerman (administrator of the VIC HUG SAR GMKA observership program), and Dr. Markiian Nozdrin.

Tetiana Pavlishevska, MD Visited in February to Study POCUS and Emergency Medicine

The VIC-HUG-SAR-GMKA team has been able, on occasion, to arrange for special training flights with the Boston MedFlight team for our observers with the help of their Education Coordinator, Mary Arredondo. The Boston MedFlight team's generosity and understanding of the value of this experience for Ukrainian physicians to observe the process, given that many of them are actively practicing on battle grounds and front line hospitals, greatly enhances the VIC-HUG-SAR-GMKA program and strengthens the connections built between Boston area medical experts and the Ukrainian observers.



Pictured above is Tetiana Pavlishevska with her Boston Med Flight mentor

MedFlight Reflections

by Tetiana Pavilshevska, MD

When I was a teenager, I dreamed of becoming a pilot. I was inspired by the works of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, who himself was a pilot. Later, my love for medicine took over, and aviation was forgotten.

Until the day I visited MedFlight base at Bedford. It turns out that flying and medicine can be combined. It's fascinating.

At the Bedford base, there's a businesslike but friendly atmosphere. The medics instruct me about safety — safety always comes first!

After that, the team starting their shift goes to inspect the equipment and the helicopter itself to ensure there are no issues during a call.

Sometimes the shifts are busy, and sometimes they're slow. The medics gather in a cozy staff room — like one big family.

When there's time, they train on flight simulators (the helicopter pilot explains how to operate the aircraft if, for some reason, he is incapacitated) and on medical mannequins (practicing medical skills).

A call comes in, and the team is ready for takeoff. I get into the helicopter, adrenaline pumping. For me, this is for the first time; for the team, it's just another working day.

During the shift, they transport many patients. It's fascinating to watch how they prepare, communicate, and discuss the call and their roles on the way to the patient.

How they receive the patient, prepare them for the flight. Inside the helicopter, space is tight, it's noisy, and the flight can sometimes be uneven — all of which complicates their work. But they're ready for anything. Literally.

After transferring the patient to the hospital, I exhale. Everything is fine. We head back to the base, flying over the evening city. And here, there's room for beauty.

At this moment, you mentally analyze the call, but your eyes can't help being distracted by the stunning view below.

After landing, the team takes off their heavy helmets and transforms back into "ordinary people," only in blue flight suits with the word "Medic" identifying them.

The corridor is lined with many photographs — of dedicated employees. Most of them live quite far from the base, but they commute there because, as one of them put it, this is the best job in the world.

Yes, saving lives truly is the best job in the world. And the ability to combine delivery of medical care with aviation -- even better than best!

Bringing it Back Home

Past scholars of the VIC-HUG-SAR-GMKA observership program, totaling 61 to date from 25+ subspecialties, have achieved significant success Back Home in Ukraine. For our bimonthly newsletters, we highlight at least one of the accomplishments in their ongoing dissemination of knowledge and skills.

Critical Publication from HUG Alumni & Partners Highlights Steps to Address the Rampant Problem of Antibiotic-Resistant Infections in Ukraine:

[The Lancet](#) – Cumulative antibiogram results of over 6800 diagnostic isolates from the First Lviv Territorial Medical Union, Ukraine - Heilie Uren, first author; Dr. Oleh Samchuk; Dr. Nataliya Matolinets; and Dr. Hnat Hreuchuk are all valued HUG collaborators. Heilie now serves on our newly formed Infectious Disease Control Working Group co-facilitated by U.S. and Ukrainian based experts. The pivotal publication in the Lancet provides “a foundation for antimicrobial stewardship and infection prevention and control initiatives within Western Ukraine’s largest hospital union...” The data help “inform regional strategies against antimicrobial resistance.” Measures that should be in place to curb resistant infections (a rampant problem in Ukraine), as suggested by the work of our valued First TMO colleagues, involve collection of “robust microbiological data, interdisciplinary coordination, and resource allocation...”

Next steps for the working group mentioned include designing pilots aimed at reducing multidrug resistant organisms (MDROs) in Ukraine. One of our first proposed ideas relates to evaluating effectiveness and feasibility of whole-body decontamination upon emergency department admission of both military personnel and civilians.

An interview with Mentor, Dr. Andrew Liteplo, MD



**Chief, Division of Ultrasound in Emergency Medicine
Director, Center for Ultrasound Research and Education
Massachusetts General Hospital**

What inspired you to become a mentor for HUG SAR observers?

Growing up as an American of Ukrainian descent in the Ukrainian community in NYC, it was ingrained upon me and all of my peers to help Ukraine however possible. The escalation of Russian aggression in 2022 has made the need greater than ever. Mentoring HUG SAR physicians and arming them with tools they can use to improve the quality of medical care in Ukraine seems like the least that one can do.

What is your approach or philosophy toward mentoring Ukrainian physicians?

My approach to mentoring Ukrainian physicians is the same as mentoring any physicians. Create a culture of support, identify what is important to them, and connect them with people and resources that help promote their growth.

Can you suggest strategies for mentees to effectively seek guidance and support from mentors?

Mentees should first identify a mentor whose skill set and interests align with their own. They should then be proactive and help the mentor understand their goals, especially if these change over time. Being open and honest helps to create a culture of trust and understanding.

Can you share specific success stories or outcomes from your mentoring experiences?

One of my most memorable mentees was Dr. Vadym Vus. We share a passion for point-of-care ultrasound [POCUS] and its education. After his experience here in Boston, we continued our friendship. We subsequently met in Ukraine and together taught ultrasound to doctors traveling to the front lines. He is an amazing human being and a visionary in his field. I am proud to be his friend and colleague.

What advice do you have for other HUG SAR mentors?

Fostering the mentor-mentee relationship will reap substantial rewards for both. Approach your mentee with an open mind and be ready to learn from them.

What lasting impact do you hope to have on your mentees?

I hope to leave a lasting impact by helping my mentees develop confidence, critical thinking, and self-reliance. Beyond immediate skills or knowledge, I want to inspire them to approach challenges with curiosity and resilience. My goal is for them to carry forward a mindset of continuous learning, professionalism, and integrity—so they not only grow individually but also positively influence their teams, patients, and communities. Ultimately, I hope to empower them to become mentors themselves one day, creating a ripple effect of support and leadership.

Are there any final thoughts or reflections you would like to share about your mentoring journey?

The HUG program's commitment to helping individual Ukrainian Scholars at Risk directly helps Ukrainian society. Being steadfast in this support of Ukraine at this moment in time of uncertainty is critical and to be lauded.

Thank you to our partners, [Harvard Scholars at Risk](#), the JMR Barker Foundation, and the many philanthropists who donate to our VIC - Scholars at Risk Ukraine fund to help to support our ongoing efforts to improve medical care for Ukrainians.

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