

**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic and
the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova and
the Fetal Medicine Foundation
on
A FETAL MEDICINE PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD 2022-2025**

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic and
The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova and
The Fetal Medicine Foundation**, hereinafter referred to as "the Participants",

Aiming at promoting specialized care for pregnant women in the Republic of Moldova thus reducing maternal and perinatal mortality and morbidity,
Stressing the need for all pregnant women to have access to free specialized care, when needed,

Have reached the following understanding:

1. The Participants will collaborate within the framework of a "Fetal Medicine Programme for the period 2022-2025", attached hereto as Annex.
2. The objectives of this Programme, the modalities of its implementation and the responsibilities of the Participants are as defined in the Annex. If needed for its implementation, the concerned Participants will conclude separate agreements on specific issues.
3. Any disagreement concerning the interpretation or implementation of the present Memorandum of Understanding and its Annex will be settled amicably, by consultations between the Participants concerned.
4. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova designates the Mother and Child Health Institute as the local executive partner for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding.
5. This Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force on the date of its signature by all the Participants.

Done in three originals, in the English language.

**For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Hellenic Republic**

**Mr. Nikolaos Georgios S. Dendias
Minister for Foreign Affairs**

Place and Date
Athens, 3.11.2022

**For the Ministry of Health of the
Republic of Moldova**

**Dr. Ala Nemerenco
Minister of Health**

Place and Date *Chisinau, 19.12.2022*

For the Fetal Medicine Foundation

Professor Kypros Nikolaides

Place and Date
London, 8.11.2022

FETAL MEDICINE PROGRAMME FOR THE PERIOD 2022-2025

Introduction

Most pregnancies are normal and without complications. However, sometimes a woman or the unborn baby may require specialised care to achieve the best outcome for both mother and baby. Women are usually referred when a problem is detected on a routine scan, if they have a high-risk screening test or when they have a history of problems in previous pregnancies. In these circumstances, they may require specialised care from a fetal medicine team. The Fetal Medicine Units:

- Assess women at added risk of fetal abnormality.
- Confirm diagnosis of fetal abnormality.
- Give detailed information about likely outcomes, which includes providing multi-disciplinary input.
- Inform women and families about the choices available.
- Initiate ongoing monitoring of pregnancies, where appropriate.
- Undertake interventional and therapeutic procedures, such as fetal blood transfusion.
- Assess possible complications in multiple births.
- Screening for, diagnosis of and treatment (where relevant) of:
 - Chromosome abnormalities.
 - Fetal anomalies.
 - Single gene genetic diseases.
 - Haemolytic disease of the newborn.
 - Complex multiple pregnancies.
 - Preeclampsia
 - Fetal growth restriction.

To reduce maternal and perinatal mortality and morbidity, it is important to spread the use of obstetric ultrasound in each hospital and community health center.

Objectives of the Programme

1. Establish a Fetal Medicine Unit

It is important to establish the Fetal Medicine Unit (FMU) within the structure of the National Health Care System. It will be therefore established in the Mother and Child Health Institute in Chisinau for free care by all women of the country, which cooperates closely with the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu", Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

The long-term objective of the Programme is to set up a substantial number of FMU throughout the country to facilitate the access of the local population.

2. Establish a Fetal Medicine training programme

- Create one-year MSc Degree in Obstetric Ultrasound and Fetal Medicine. This would be organized in association with the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu", Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and would involve intensive practical training on a daily basis and a theoretical component that would mostly depend on internet-based material, videoconferences, and weekly meetings to present and discuss cases. Upon completion of the course, there will be a theoretical and practical examination with external examiners from the Fetal Medicine Foundation.

- Provision of scholarships for 2-year Fellowship in Fetal Medicine Foundation, King's Hospital in London. These doctors will ultimately be responsible for training other doctors at the Fetal Medicine Unit in the Institute of Mother and Child Health.

Responsibilities of the Parties Concerned

A. Responsibilities of the Fetal Medicine Foundation*

The following will be donated by the Fetal Medicine Foundation:

- a. Award of two 2-year fellowships in London. The practical training is undertaken at the Fetal Medicine units at King's College Hospital in London, Medway Maritime Hospital in Kent, and Southend University Hospital in Essex. During the period of training the doctors are closely supervised by Professor K. Nikolaides and a team of Consultants in Fetal Medicine. They will observe and actively assist in the management of a wide range of conditions. These will range from screening for fetal abnormalities to involvement in complex conditions diagnosed antenatally, such as twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome. The involvement of the doctors will vary depending on their level of experience, but the aim is that the trainees become competent in all aspects of patient care and counselling. It is expected that by the end of the Training Fellowship the doctor will have obtained the Fetal Medicine Foundation Certificates of Competence in:
 - Nuchal translucency scan
 - Assessment of the nasal bone
 - Assessment of ductus venosus flow
 - Assessment of tricuspid flow
 - Preeclampsia screening
 - Fetal defects
 - Fetal echocardiography
 - Doppler Ultrasound
 - Cervical assessment

Obstetricians who have been registered in the General Medical Council will receive training in amniocentesis and chorionic villi sampling and receive the appropriate FMF certificate of competence. The trainees will have the

opportunity to develop their research interests in fetal-maternal medicine or take part in ongoing research studies. The doctors who have successfully obtained all the above Certificates of Competence and participated in research will be eligible for the Fetal Medicine Foundation Diploma in Fetal Medicine.

Each fellowship amounts to approximately £21,892 (twenty one thousand, eight hundred and ninety two GBP) gross salary per year, subject to UK Government (Home Office) minor fluctuations.

- b. Provide two (2) ultrasound machines, two (2) couches, five (5) computers and software, furniture for the Fetal Medicine Unit
- c. Develop the syllabus and necessary material for the MSc course in cooperation with the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu", Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- d. Commit to a series of teleconferences for lectures by international experts.
- e. Provide external examiners on a yearly basis for the final exams of the MSc graduates
- f. Provide external quality control for the ultrasound services in the Fetal Medicine Unit that will offer such services
- g. Provide clinical protocols for the diagnosis and management of conditions detected by ultrasound
- h. Help in the development of research projects.

*The Fetal Medicine Foundation (<https://fetalmedicine.org/>), is a Registered Charity that aims to improve the health of pregnant women and their babies through research and training in fetal medicine. The Foundation, with the support of an international group of experts/specialists, has introduced an educational programme for both healthcare professionals and parents and a series of certificates of competence in different aspects of fetal medicine. In the last 20 years, the Foundation has supported research and training in the following areas through grants to a total of more than £23 million:

- o Early diagnosis of fetal abnormalities
- o Screening for chromosomal defects
- o Development of safer techniques for prenatal diagnosis
- o Intrauterine fetal surgery
- o Prediction and prevention of preeclampsia
- o Prediction and prevention of preterm birth
- o Prediction and prevention of stillbirth
- o Prediction and management of fetal growth restriction
- o Problems of multiple pregnancies

In 2016/2017, the Fetal Medicine Foundation made a donation of £22 million to King's College Hospital National Health Service Foundation Trust for investment in the Trust's Fetal Medicine services. The main source of income for The Fetal Medicine Foundation is the Fetal Medicine Centre.

B. Responsibilities of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova

- a. Host the Fetal Medicine Unit within the premises of the Mother and Child Health Institute and cover maintenance expenses, within the limits of available financial means.

- b. Employ the doctors who got fellowships from Fetal Medicine Foundation.
- c. The timing and selection of the candidates for the Fellowships to be decided by the Ministry of Health and the State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu", Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, in transparent criteria and procedures. The Ministry of Health will submit the curriculum vitae of four (4) candidates to the Fetal Medicine Foundation, which in turn will make the final selection of the two (2) candidates¹. The candidates must be newly qualified obstetricians or trainees of their last year of training in Obstetrics. The candidates selected for the fellowships, will have to sign a contract with the Ministry of Health that they are obliged, after the completion of the fellowship to return, for a period of at least five (5) years, back to the Republic of Moldova and work for the public sector hospital.
- d. All ultrasound machines, couches, hardware and software, furniture etc. donated by the Fetal Medicine Foundation, are to be retained and used exclusively by the Fetal Medicine Unit.
- e. A Permanent plaque "JOINT PROGRAMME BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC AND THE FETAL MEDICINE FOUNDATION" in the national language and in English is to be placed in a visible area at the entrance of the Fetal Medicine Unit along with the Greek flag.
- f. An Annual Report on the operations of the Fetal Medicine Unit, (the exact content would be specified by the Fetal Medicine Foundation), should be sent to the Fetal Medicine Foundation, the Embassy of Greece in Bucharest and Hellenic Aid of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

C. Responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic (Hellenic Aid)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic (Hellenic Aid) will be responsible for facilitating the coordination between the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova and the Fetal Medicine Foundation.

¹ The UK Government (Home Office) has the following requirements for the granting of visa: Home Office (UK Government) for obtaining the required skilled worker Visa (<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide>). It is essential for the successful candidates to comply with the below 2 points.

1. To prove they can read, write, speak and understand English to at least level B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.

They can prove their knowledge of English by:

- passing a Secure English Language Test (SELT) from an approved provider,
- having a GCSE, A level, Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5, Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English, gained through study at a UK school that they began when they were under 18,
- having a degree-level academic qualification that was taught in English - if they studied abroad, they will need to apply through Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) for confirmation that their qualification is equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD. Please see relevant link from the Home Office website (<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english>).

2. To provide a criminal record certificate. Please see link on how to apply for criminal records checks (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>).

All procedures for obtaining the visa for the candidates will be undertaken by Fetal Medicine Foundation.

D. Evaluation

The implementation of the Programme will be evaluated jointly by Hellenic Aid and the Fetal Medicine Foundation on a yearly basis and upon its completion, December 2025, it will be decided if it will be renewed for another four-year period. The Programme will be evaluated on the basis of its impact and effectiveness, according to the principles and criteria of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD. In this context, biannual spot visits by staff of the Fetal Medicine Foundation, the Embassy of Greece in Bucharest and/or experts from Hellenic Aid will take place in the context of evaluation and monitoring.