Report for the 3rd quarter
2020
Dear friends,

Thanks to you, in July–September 2020, 477 children with cancer and their families have received targeted aid. Together with other donors, you have transferred 17.4 million hryvnias for the children. Thank you for your amazing generosity and personal involvement!

Total expenses in the third quarter amounted to 17.8 million hryvnias. Administrative expenses — 4.74%.

Your help really has an impact. Each of your contributions gives visible results. In this report, we will tell how you change the lives of children. And what is happening in the field of pediatric oncology at the state level as well.

We are grateful that you stay nearby, because it is your merit that children defeat cancer.

To be continued

Your “Tabletochki”
In "Okhmatdyt", two more unrelated bone marrow transplantations were performed, but the struggle goes on

18-year-old Leonid and 8-year-old Daryna got a chance to recover thanks to bone marrow donors from other countries. This is the second and the third unrelated bone marrow transplantations (BMT) in the history of Ukraine. Many people have been working for several years to make such treatment possible in our country at the legislative level.

However, in order to make unrelated BMTs practicable, a lot of issues need to be addressed related to:

- professional training of doctors;
- creation of appropriate infrastructure in hospitals;
- access to bone marrow donor databases;
- transportation of bone marrow donor cells;
- availability of expensive medicines that a child needs before and after transplantation.

Until these issues are resolved, each unrelated BMT becomes a special operation involving many people and foundations.

For example, you have paid 490 thousand hryvnias for Leonid’s and almost 160 thousand hryvnias for Daryna’s additional medicines. And this is only the cost of medicines that children received in a targeted way. Not to mention the help for the departments, namely medicines and consumables, which are purchased at the request of managers at once for all children being treated. That is, your contribution to the BMT of Leonid and Daryna is actually even greater.

We celebrate the victory, but the struggle goes on. For example, the number of applications for the purchase of Erwinase (asparaginase Erwinia chrysanthemi) has now increased rapidly. This medicine is not registered in Ukraine and is not purchased by the state. 1 bottle costs about 1,000 euros.

There is no alternative to Erwinase. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the manufacturer of the medicine is unique and its capacity is not enough to meet the demand. Erwinase is difficult to find in foreign pharmacies and to bring to Ukraine without regular flights.

Unfortunately, since mid-October, we have stopped guaranteeing its purchase due to the lack of funds. If the Ministry of Health does not take action, we will soon have to choose between children in terms of buying the medicine.

The foundation’s expenditures on foreign medicines in the third quarter amounted to UAH 4.24 million*.

*This is the amount actually paid by the foundation. It does not include the cost of medicines that we ordered from suppliers in the third quarter, but paid in October 2020.
According to various estimates, 150-300 children with oncological, hematological and other serious diseases need unrelated BMT every year. To make all these BMTs possible we call on the Ministry of Health to implement the following systematic steps:

- to include the medicines necessary for bone marrow transplantation in the nomenclature of public procurement;
- to negotiate with the foreign manufacturers in order to encourage them to register such medicines in Ukraine;
- to reform the public procurement system (needs assessment, collection of applications, distribution of medicines) in order to spend budget funds more efficiently and to meet the needs of hospitals more quickly;
- to improve the collection of cancer statistics in order to obtain reliable information on the number of patients in the need of such medicines, on the quality and results of their treatment;
- to resume work on the National Cancer Control Strategy for 2020-2030;
- to introduce unified protocols as a minimum standard of treatment;
- to create and develop the State base of bone marrow donors.
The process of public procurement of medicines kick started

SE "Medical Procurement of Ukraine" began to hold tenders for the purchase of medicines to treat childhood cancer. The first deliveries under the 2020 budget are expected in November–December this year. But there are still issues with the reagents for laboratory diagnostics. In September, the Ministry of Health selected an international specialized procurement organization, but the tender procedures have not yet begun by the end of the third quarter.

As part of a group of experts at the Ministry of Health, we are working to ensure that the savings (which are about $4 million left over from the 2019 budget) are used to purchase the additional medicines that have already run out or are running out in hospitals.
Requirements to future doctors have decreased. This will affect the quality of treatment for children

Unfortunately, the Ministry of Health of Ukraine ignored the warnings of patient organizations and reduced the passing score of the KROK-2020 qualifying exam for future interns and doctors. The Ministry of Health calls the pandemic the official reason for this decision.

We are sure that such a “one-year” mitigation will have consequences for many years to come. Because there can be no compromises and mitigation of requirements in the profession on which people’s health and lives depend.

A pediatrician with a low level of knowledge will not be able to notice the symptoms of a deadly disease in time and to refer the patient for examination to the right specialist.

As a result, the child will be treated for other, fictional diseases, the precious time will be lost. And when the real disease is finally diagnosed, a mediocre oncologist will not be able to choose the optimal treatment protocol.

In this scenario, the cost of treating a child would be many times higher, with less chance of winning.
The Ministry of Health has increased the state compensation for hospitals for the treatment of childhood cancer

The Ministry of Health has increased the tariffs for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in children by 4.7 times.

In September–December 2020, hospitals will receive from the National Health Service of Ukraine almost five times higher payment for their services in the treatment of children with cancer. We hope that this will help nurses and doctors to receive a more decent reward for their hard and responsible work.

We thank the Ministry of Health, the National Health Insurance Fund, doctors and everyone who lobbied for these changes with us. We expect that in 2021 the tariffs for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in children will be approved at a higher level from the beginning.
Milana, Yarik, Angelina and Vlad have returned from the treatment abroad

Four of our wards flew home from Italy in July.

The children had been treated at the University Hospital of Verona. They all had a bone marrow transplantation from an unrelated donor there.

Treatment abroad was paid for by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, and you helped families to pay for the tickets and accommodation.

Now the children are at home. They are recovering after a difficult treatment and together with their relatives learn to live a normal life without the disease.

Currently, 21 families are under the care of the Foreign Treatment Program. The expenditures on the program in the third quarter amounted to 563.6 thousand hryvnias.
Winners visited summer camp

24 children aged 9 to 18, who have overcome cancer, spent three days outside the city in a camp without parents. The children participated in quests, reflections, communication games, creative studios, workshops, campfires, picnics, kayaking and, of course, a disco.

Cancer locks a child in a hospital for a long time, and after the disease it is difficult to return to a normal life and to communicate with peers. With the financial support of the Kyiv charity flea market "Kurazh" we organize communication clubs for the winners, where they learn to be confident and independent in an atmosphere of trust together with a psychologist. The summer camp was a continuation of classes at the club.

We strictly adhered to security measures. All the children returned home healthy. We hope that, when the pandemic ends, such camps will become a tradition bringing together all the children winners.

Liudmyla, Sasha’s mother:
"Through this time, I have changed a lot and let go of my fears. Sasha bathed in the river and lake more than once after the camp".

Ksiusha:
"I learned that I can dance!"
The parents who lost their children to cancer went to the Carpathians

Unfortunately, more than half of children with cancer keep on dying in Ukraine. After the loss of a child, the parents are left alone with their grief. Friends are becoming estranged. At least a mother has to resign, while a child is being treated. A heavy sense of guilt and hopelessness is added to the social vacuum.

There are psychological support groups in the foundation to help parents survive the grief. Every two months during the year, families meet, spend time together, receive help from a psychologist and support from other parents with the same loss.

For the second year in a row, at the end of August, we are organizing a therapeutic trip to the Carpathians for the families. This format helps families to feel they are alive again.

This year the visiting group was smaller due to the quarantine. 7 families went to the Carpathians. The program of the trip included: daily work in a psychological support group, climbing Mount Khomiak, physical activities for adults and children, conversations, laughter, memories and sitting by the fire.

And although the families spent only three days in the mountains, it charged them for many months with the strength to live, because life, just like memory, lasts forever.
Fifth Remembrance Day brought families together online

Every year we gather families, in which a child has died of cancer, in an apple orchard to hug and to remember the children together.

This year, the pandemic did not allow neither a hug nor an apple orchard. The fifth Remembrance Day was held online. We also filmed the first documentary movie about life after a loss. It starred parents who lost their children: Iryna, Olexandr and Yulia.

Despite the online format, we managed to keep the usual scenario and the atmosphere of Remembrance Day. The families watched a documentary, opened presents, laughed, cried and remembered children’s antics. Together with us, the parents were supported by the TV presenter Alla Mazur and the actress Irma Vitovska.

Immediately after Remembrance Day 13 parents stated their willingness to join our psychological support groups. It is a great victory and courage to say “yes” to the life after loss of a child.

This will be the fourth group that will give families the strength to live on.
Lemonade day
This year, there was both off-line and online charity lemonade. Despite the quarantine, the “lemonade” allowed to rise almost 400 thousand hryvnias to help children.

Charity instead of flowers
Pupils gave teachers a virtual bouquet instead of the usual one and helped the children with charitable contributions of 115 thousand hryvnias.

Wave of victories from River Mall
Every two weeks the cutting-edge shopping and entertainment center in Kyiv raffles off two certificates for shopping among all philanthropists who make a contribution of 200 hryvnias on the website rivermall.tabletochki.org. Tetiana, Olexandr, Valentyna, Aliona, Lidia, Tetiana, Olha and Olena have already become winners. The promotion lasts until the end of 2020. Join the wave of goodness!
The building of the Kyiv City Council was lit up with golden lights for the sake of children with cancer.

All over the world, September is the Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. “Golden September”, because golden color and golden ribbon are a symbol of struggle against childhood cancer. Every year in September, iconic buildings and monuments in different countries are lit with golden lights.

This year, for the first time Kyiv City Council joined CN Tower in Toronto and White House in Washington. On September 29 its building was illuminated with golden lights in support of children with cancer. The Gulliver Mall also shone with golden lights during one evening for the children. All this is to remind: less than half of children with cancer recover in Ukraine so far.

We can change these statistics. Together.
The struggle goes on.
Your help is needed every day.
Please stay close to the children.

To be continued...

tabletochki.org