

SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE, PRACTICAL LEARNING, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: REFLECTIONS FROM THE 47TH INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL STUDENTS' CONGRESS

As a fourth-year medical student, I have learned over the years that scientific congresses offer valuable experiences beyond traditional medical education. The 47th International Medical Students' Congress (IMSC) took place in Ohrid, North Macedonia, bringing together students, researchers, and healthcare professionals from various countries to exchange knowledge, develop practical skills, and establish professional connections. As an active participant presenting a clinical case report, I was honored to be selected by the Scientific Committee to present my work, titled "Acute Stanford Type A Aortic Dissection as the Initial Manifestation of Suspected Marfan Syndrome." The experience allowed me to learn to professionally present complex medical cases to a distinguished scientific audience, discuss clinical findings with experts, and confidently defend and debate a case not typically found in textbooks. Presenting my case report was both challenging and rewarding. Preparing for the presentation involved a thorough literature review, a detailed analysis of clinical findings, and learning how to explain medical information in a simple and clear way.

Alongside the scientific presentations, the congress also offered practical workshops in fields such as surgery and anesthesiology, allowing us medical students to gain hands-on experience in areas of particular clinical interest. These sessions showed us the importance of teamwork, communication, and attention to detail, while also connecting theoretical knowledge with everyday clinical practice. What I found particularly meaningful was the opportunity to interact with professors and experts from North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey. Through their lectures and personal clinical experiences, they created discussions that were not only educational but also genuinely inspiring for young medical students. Listening to experienced physicians speak so passionately about their profession further strengthened my motivation to continue learning and growing in medicine.

At the same time, the congress created an environment that encouraged interaction between students from diverse universities and international backgrounds, fostering the exchange of ideas and experiences across different educational and cultural settings. During scientific sessions, workshops, and informal discussions, we shared a strong enthusiasm for medicine and a genuine desire to learn from each other. These exchanges, together with discussions about future careers and new friendships, showed that professional growth extends beyond academic achievements. The connections made at such events often provide valuable support, motivation, and opportunities for future collaboration.

Reflecting on this experience, I became more aware of how important environments like these are in shaping young medical professionals. Beyond the academic program itself, the congress created a space where knowledge, experience, and diverse perspectives were openly shared among students and physicians from various backgrounds.

Participating in discussions, observing different approaches to medicine, and engaging with people who share the same dedication to healthcare made the entire experience both memorable and motivating.

The 47th International Medical Students' Congress not only broadened my perspective on medicine but also reinforced my enthusiasm for continued learning and professional growth.

**Sincerely,
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