



20th Anniversary

From the Diagnostic-Treatment-Rehabilitation Center for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired "Cochlear Center" to the World Hearing Center

25 Ph.D. titles, up to 70 hearing improving surgeries daily, the organization of 169 scientific conferences and workshops, over 300 awards and distinctions, 1295 Polish and international publications, 4858 papers and speeches at Polish and international conferences. This is merely a part of scientific, clinical, organizational and medical output accumulated during last 20 years by Prof. Henryk Skarżyński and his team. This unique achievements were possible i.a. due to the establishment of the Diagnostic-Treatment-Rehabilitation Center for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired "Cochlear Center". 14th July is the day of 20th anniversary of the Center's opening.

"Cochlear Center", the second institution of such kind in Europe, gave rise to the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, as well as to the World Hearing Center, opened last year. The opening of the "Cochlear Center" was a huge success. In that time, the establishment of the institution of such international importance was possible because Poland has opened to other countries, to new solutions and new necessities, as well as due to the initiative of Prof. Henryk Skarżyński who established two non-governmental organizations: the Foundation of Medical Development "Homo-Homini" in 1990 and the Association of Friends of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired in 1992. Both organizations officially brought into existence the Diagnostic-Treatment-Rehabilitation Center for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired "Cochlear Center"

- I was striving obstinately to prevent the huge scientific and clinical success – the earlier implementation of deafness treatment program in Poland - from being wasted. To guarantee to the first group of operated patients interdisciplinary care and access to the newest achievements already implemented in the world. I desired to show to the world that we, the Poles, are not worse – that we know how to build a modern institution from the foundations, and we know how to manage it competently. Already after few months the "Cochlear Center" was receiving over 30 patients per day and approx. 200 specialist examinations were performed - Prof. Henryk Skarżyński, the Director of the Center, is recalling.

After three years of functioning, the „Cochlear Center” presented not only the success in hearing disorders treatment, but also a significant scientific, didactic and organizational output. As a proof of recognition, the Minister of Health and Social Care in agreement with the Minister of Finance and the Chairman of the State Committee for Scientific Research, have brought into existence the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing.

- We have been building the Institute from the foundations, according to our own ideas, guidelines. Even though we had some experience, it was still a huge challenge. Today, the Institute is a properly functioning and organized enterprise, with over 300 employees, strong national and international position, and numerous awards and distinctions for its achievements. This is a leading research institute and highly specialized hospital, and as a medical institution is representing the highest reference level – said Prof. Skarżyński, who has been managing the Institute up to this day.

Parallel with the adaptation of a new seat of the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, the preparation for the construction of the permanent seat had begun. The idea of the establishment of super-modern, spacious, excellently equipped medical center was developed by Prof. Henryk Skarżyński already in 1992. 5 years later, the Foundation of Medical Development “Homo-Homini” began to build a new Institute’s seat in Kajetany, next to Warsaw. The solemn opening ceremony of the International Center of Hearing and Speech took place on May 2003.

- In the first year from the establishing of the International Center already took place several momentous events: I performed the first in the world cochlear implant surgery in a partially deafened child and the first in Poland middle ear implantation, ‘Home Rehabilitation Clinic’ telemedical program had been developed, we commenced a series of National Conferences for Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Patients – reminisces Prof. H. Skarżyński. – Each following year was bringing new challenges, great international scientific events, interesting research projects. Our research & development, technological, educational and organizational achievements had been awarded many times by Polish and international medical, economic and scientific societies, even medias. I was resolved to take advantage of that situation, as you must always aim higher – says Prof. Skarżyński, initiator and creator of the Center.

The World Hearing Center, opened in May 2012, is the unique, first of this kind unit on the international scale. Its creation was an important step for the scientific progress and research on new methods of diagnostics and treatment of sensory handicaps. The Center is both a modern hospital providing medical services on the highest international level, equipped with the unique armamentarium and with great technical infrastructure, as well as exquisitely prepared Educational Center conducting wide range of research and academic activities, enabling training of specialists from the entire world in medicine, clinical engineering, speech therapy, deaf education and psychology.

- In 2012 something important happened in Polish medicine and science: the World Hearing Center – an institution unique on a global scale had been established. Something like that is not created in one day, and does not come into being every year. There is a work of many individuals involved and quite concrete financial input. An investment worth more than 120 million has been realized within several months. More than a third of the money involved has been directly earned by our team. There were created new scientific departments, many of them first in the world, such as the first in the world National Network of Teleaudiology. Within few months we performed the largest number of hearing improving surgeries in the world – recalls prof. Skarżyński. – Creating the principles and plan of activities of the World Hearing Center I saw in from the very beginning as multidimensional, involving various scientific areas not only in the field of medicine, but also beyond. I wanted the creation of this institution to guarantee – through scientific work – creation of the new image, position of Polish science and medicine in the world, and to show the new directions. – said prof. Skarżyński, director of the World Hearing Center. .

Time demonstrated that these words have not been empty. In a period from May 2012 to June 2013 the members of the World Hearing Center's team prepared and presented 309 research studies on 57 world, continental and international congresses, conferences and symposia, and also in the same period 157 studies on 37 scientific conferences in Poland. This places us in a close lead of the global scientific activity. In the first year of work of the World Hearing Center there had been performed more than 18 thousand medical procedures and over 200 thousand medical services. Every day there are about 70 hearing improving surgeries performed – the largest number in the world in terms of otorhinolaryngology, audiology and phoniatrics.

- Opening of the World Hearing Center gives us an enormous opportunity to build a strong position for Poland on the scientific and medical map of the World. And, although this opening is a beginning of a new, great program, and its scenario I write every day, I will do everything in my power not to waste this opportunity – says prof. Henryk Skarżyński.