

## **REPORT OF ACTIONS DURING THE 5th EUROPEAN CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION WEEK 2011**

The CCPW 2011 in Greece focused on the need for better health education programs especially for the general public. The primary objective was to encourage participation in the cervical cancer screening and HPV Vaccination programs that operate in Greece.

The CCPW 2011 in Greece was supported for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row by the Hellenic Society for the Prevention and Treatment of Papillomavirus (HPV), Member of ECCA, as well as by "AgaliaZo", the Society of Volunteers Against Cancer. Their main initiatives took place in Athens and Thessaloniki, with minor events in smaller towns.

A campaign under the slogan: "Cervical Cancer Can Be Prevented – Do not Postpone HPV Vaccination. Do the Pap Test Regularly" was held under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Athens it was endorsed by "AgaliaZo", the representative of ECCA in Greece (Prof. Agorastos), the Hellenic Association of Gynecological Oncology and the Hellenic Pediatric Society. The CCPW 2011 kicked-off in Athens with a press conference, which was organized by AgaliaZo in Athens in January 25<sup>th</sup> at the Cultural Centre of the City of Athens.



**The panel of the press conference**

Speaker at the Athens press conference included Dr. T. Agorastos, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), Head of the 4<sup>th</sup> Dpt. of Obstetrics and Gynecology of AUTH, President of the Hellenic Society of Research and Treatment of Human PapillomaVirus (HPV), Dr. A. Antsaklis,

Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology of University of Athens and President of the Hellenic Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Dr. A. Konstantopoulos, Professor of Pediatrics, President of the National Immunization Committee, President of the Greek the European and the Worldwide Pediatric Association, Mrs. T. Stavrou, Doctor of the Department of Public Health of the Greek Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Mrs. Ch. Margari, President of the Hellenic Society of Cytology and Mrs. I. Skourta, President of Agaliazo.

In Thessaloniki, especially this year, the main event for the CCPW was an Educational Conference about: "HPV-infection, -testing, -vaccination" organised by Prof. Theodoros Agorastos as President of the Board of the Hellenic Society for the Research and Treatment of HPV and by the Scientific Society of the Students of the Medical School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The meeting was directed to students of the Medical School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and was held in Thessaloniki on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010. The conference was designed to provide the students of Medicine of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki with the latest information about the epidemiology, causes and prevention of cervical cancer through population-based screening and HPV vaccination programs. In addition, the meeting held a series of lectures designed especially for this day about methods of practical training and active participation of the medial students in cervical cancer prevention.



Photos from the educational conference

A significant amount of media coverage, including a press-conference, 10 articles in national and regional newspapers and 21 articles published on websites, was achieved during the CCPW, presenting mainly the Educational Conference and other national and European initiatives towards cervical cancer prevention and focusing on the new primary (vaccine) and secondary (HPV DNA testing as screening test) prevention perspectives.



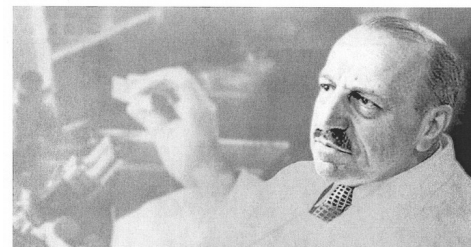
#### Media coverage in greece

"AgaliaZo", the Society of Volunteers Against Cancer tried this year to give to the mentioned campaign a Pan-Hellenic coverage; large information displays were set-up in the main squares of many Greek towns, not only during the EUROPEAN CCPW 2011, but until the 12th of February 2011 (on 27<sup>th</sup> January in Athens, on 27<sup>th</sup> January in Piraeus, 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of January in Kavala, 1-2<sup>nd</sup> of February in Thessaloniki, on 5-6<sup>th</sup> of February in Patras,, on 8-9<sup>th</sup> of February in Heraklion, Crete and on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February in Piraeus, where the closing ceremony of the campaign took place). Brochures on cervical cancer prevention were distributed in the area not only by Agaliazo volunteers, but also by medical students and doctors (gynecologists, pediatricians, and cytologists) who additionally answered questions of the public about cervical cancer.

## THE INSIDER

### Το HPV DNA αντικαθιστά το τεστ Παπανικολάου

ΠΕΡΙΣΤΗΤΗ, 27 ΙΑΝΟΥΑΡΙΟΥ 2011 15:26



Το HPV DNA τεστ για την ανίχνευση του ιού των ανθρώπινων θηλωμάτων, ο οποίος ενοχοποιείται για τον καρκίνο του τραχήλου της μήτρας, αναμένεται να αντικαταστήσει τα προσεχή χρόνια το τεστ Παπανικολάου, καθώς έχει αποδειχτεί ότι είναι αποτελεσματικότερο. Μάλιστα οι γυναίκες θα έχουν τη δυνατότητα να παίρνουν οι ίδιες από τον εαυτό τους το κολπικό επίχρισμα για το HPV DNA τεστ.

Ο εμβολισμός κατά του ιού HPV σε συνδυασμό με το HPV DNA τεστ είναι η πιο σύγχρονη και αποτελεσματικότερη μέθοδος για την πρόληψη του καρκίνου του τραχήλου της μήτρας, επισήμανε ο καθηγητής μαιευτικής-γυναικολογίας στο ΑΠΘ Θεόδωρος Αγοραστός, με αφορμή ενημερωτική ημερίδα με θέμα «HPV - λοίμωξη - testing - εμβολισμός» που θα πραγματοποιηθεί αύριο στη Θεσσαλονίκη στο πλαίσιο της 9ης Πανεπιστημιακής Εβδομάδας Πρόληψης του Καρκίνου του Τραχήλου της Μήτρας.





**Information display in syntagma, athens**

From the info kiosks 16.000 brochures were distributed with the slogan: "Do not Postpone HPV Vaccination. Do the Pap Test Regularly", while 2.844 women completed a questionnaire concerning their knowledge and attitudes towards cervical cancer prevention in the context of a competition, which included prizes draw. The questionnaire could also be completed electronically through internet in Agaliazo web page (<http://www.agaliazo.gr>), combined with Facebook.



**2.844 women filled-out questionnaires during the CCPW 2011**

Original and imaginative parallel events tried to attract as many people as possible, such as: an air balloon with the logo of the campaign made its appearance in the central squares of the towns been visited, as well as a mascot which tried to attract people to visit the info-kiosk and take part in the competition. In the closure of the campaign, the air-balloon, mascots and many balloons appeared in the same time in the most central square of Athens in Syntagma. All of these tried to give a festive atmosphere and a positive message for this cancer, the only one which has a primary and secondary prevention.

Furthermore, like in year 2010, advertisements promoting cervical cancer screening and HPV Vaccination were placed in newspapers and magazines and a radio and a TV advertisement for cervical cancer prevention was broadcast on all radio and national TV channels and in cinemas across the country.

Especially this year, the Greek Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, under the National Plan of Action for Cancer, on the occasion of the 5th European CCPW 2011, implemented a program of free screenings across the country. Although since decades the Papanicolaou screening test is offered for free in public and university hospitals, only a very low number of Greek women take advantage of this opportunity and implemented this preventive examination. However, during this week have been conducted free pap tests for all women aged 15 and older which came without a rendezvous in the clinics. The aim of Ministry of Health and Social Welfare was the raise of awareness and the realization of this preventive measure for a large proportion of the population, so that all women be convinced about the need for annual Papanicolaou testing. The program had great success and that is proven by the number (>5000) of women who came for a Papanicolaou smear test during the week.

