

## Sixty Years Faculty of Medicine in the Republic of Macedonia (1947–2007)

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### Abstract

#### Key words:

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Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia was founded in 1947 year with its educational and health activities which should lead to improvement of the health care in the country. In the past sixty years Faculty of Medicine changed its structure, position, and the role several times in order to fulfill the needs of the society for continuous increase of quantity and quality of tertiary health care, education of medical students, as well as research in the biomedical fields. Today, the organizational structure of the Medical Faculty consists of 12 institutes and 3 teaching bases in the pre-clinical department and 25 clinics, 3 institutes and 7 teaching bases which take active part in both, education and scientific activities. Altogether there are 33 departments which perform the entire educational (undergraduate, postgraduate, specialization and sub-specialization), scientific and providing health activities. These 33 departments are actively involved in the realization of the study programmes, not only at the Medical Faculty, but the Faculty of Stomatology, Pharmaceutical Faculty, the Faculty of Natural Sciences, and the Faculty of Physical Culture as well. Medical Faculty is a member of the European and the global family of institutions of this kind.

### Foundation

By the end of the Second World War the population in Macedonia was facing a difficult socio-economic, cultural situation and bad health care system. In the newly liberated country the material and personnel conditions were poor. For illustration, in 1945, on the territory of the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, there were only three Faculties of Medicine (in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana), for approximately 16.000.000 inhabitants. Whereas in Yugoslavia the total number of medical doctors was 3000 (or 1 doctor per 5.300 inhabitants), the health protection in Macedonia in that period was provided by 120

doctors and the same number of medical staff with completed secondary education per 1.200.000 inhabitants, or 1 doctor per 10.000 inhabitants. Since these faculties could not improve the newly arisen lack of personnel in the entire Yugoslavian health system, there was a need for the establishment of two new medical faculties, in Skopje and Sarajevo.

The Ministry of Public Health of the Government of People's Republic of Macedonia with the act number 4745 from August 30th, 1946, turned to the Committee of protection of the national health of the Government of People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with request to take actions for the establishment of a Faculty



*Fig. 1: Prof. Dr. Sterjo Bozdov (born January 7, 1902 in Krushevo) was the first Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia (from 1947 till 1950).*

of Medicine in Skopje. The latter, with the act number 120 from September 26th, 1946, formed a commission which explored the possibility for establishing a Faculty of Medicine in Skopje. The commission forgathered on October 22nd, 1946, and reached a decision that all the conditions for establishment of a Faculty of Medicine in Skopje were fulfilled. At the same time, the first lectures were scheduled to start on September 1st, 1947, and that the number of the newly enrolled students in the first year should range from 150 to 200.

Following the preparations done in the period between August 1946 and February 1947, the Government of People's Republic of Macedonia brought an act for establishment of a Faculty of Medicine as the fourth faculty in a row in the former Yugoslavia, right after the Medical Faculties in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, and the second after the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. The fact that the Faculty of Medicine

was the second faculty opened in People's Republic of Macedonia points out the concern of the newly formed country for the protection of the health of its inhabitants.

The first session of the teachers' council, which was lead by the acting dean Prof. D-r Sterjo Bozdov (chosen as a dean on the fourth session held on October 22nd, 1947), was held on March 17th, 1947 (Fig. 1). A decision was brought, the lectures of preclinical subjects to be organized in, what was at that time known as Bureau of Hygiene, and the barracks of the Medical High School, while the clinical subjects to be held in the departments of the "Zemska" hospital which situated 642 beds. It was decided that the studies should last for 12 semesters and that 41 subjects were to be taught. It was expected that this newly formed Faculty of Medicine with its educational and health activities will lead to improvement of the health care condition in the People's Republic of Macedonia in a very short period of time (1, 2).

At the period of its establishment, the entire faculty performed its educational and health care activities with only 40 medical doctors and 19 teachers.

The beginning of the educational activity at the Faculty of Medicine was marked by the first lesson in anatomy, held on 3rd December 1947, by assistant professor Dr. Zdenko Krizhan.

The promotion of the graduation of the first six medical doctors from the first generation of students (153 in total), six years after the first lesson, was held on December 30th, 1953, at the Macedonian National Theatre.



*Fig. 2: Institutes were built by the end of 1948 year (left) and Clinical block was finished in 1956 year (right).*

## Development of institutions

### 1948-1967 year

By the end of 1948 a new building for the Institutes was built, and in 1953 the construction of a new clinical block started, thanks to the great help and support of the Macedonian emigrants in USA, Canada and Australia. In 1956 this block was finished and ready for use (Fig. 2).

Other new clinics and accessory buildings were built during the next years, which helped the Faculty of Medicine to grow into a modern medical center (3-24) equipped with all necessary preclinical and clinical facilities (Table 1). In 1959, the Department of Stomatology was formed at the Faculty of Medicine (14).

On July 26th, 1963 Skopje was struck by a disastrous earthquake which killed more than 1.000 people and injured about 10.000 people. The Faculty of Medicine wasn't spared. All the buildings of the Faculty of Medicine were damaged more or less. With the help of the world, as well as with the support of the employed people at the Faculty of Medicine, the construction of temporary buildings and repairing and rebuilding of the damaged ones, began. So, after a short period of time the Faculty of Medicine began to work regularly.

### 1968-1987 year

In 1971, the Assembly of Social Republic of Macedonia passed a special Law, according to which the Faculty of Medicine became an institution of three main activities: education, scientific research and health care, while the Institutes and Clinics became basic organizations of the Faculty of Medicine.

In 1975, with the reformation of the University "Ss Kiril and Metodij", five university centers were formed. One of them was the University Center for Medical Sciences (UCMS) which consisted of the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Stomatology, Faculty of Physical Education, and Faculty of Pharmacy. With this reformation the faculties lost their legal representativeness, but regained it in 1979 when the University Centers were canceled.

Year 1978 meant a new phase in the development of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje: a program for standardization of space and equipment had been worked out, since the needs grew bigger and the enlarged staff required better conditions, in terms of space, and higher quality work. Therefore a construc-

tion of Pediatric Clinic, a Clinic for Infectious Diseases and a Clinic for Cardiology began (Fig. 3), as well as enlargement of the Institute for Transfuzion, the Clinic for Hematology and the Clinic for Children Psychiatry (Fig. 4). The new wing of the Institute of Radiotherapy and Oncology was also finished.



Fig. 3: In 1978 started a construction of a new Pediatric Clinic (top), Clinic for Infectious Diseases (middle), and a Clinic for Cardiology (bottom).

**Table 1: Year of establishment of some of the institutes and clinics at the Faculty of Medicine, University "Ss Kiril and Metodij", Skopje, Republic of Macedonia.**

Year of establishment	Institute	Year of establishment	Clinic
1947	Anatomy	1947	Surgery
1947	Histology	1947	Internal Medicine
1947	Chemistry with Biochemistry	1947	Gynaecology
1947	Physiology	1947	Dermatology and Venereology
1947	Pathology	1947	Pediatrics
1947	Pharmacology	1947	Ophthalmology
1947	Radiology	1947	Otorhinolaryngology
1947	Transfusiology	1947	Infective Diseases
1949	Patophysiology and Nuclear Medicine	1947	Psychiatry
1952	Microbiology and Parasitology	1950-52	Neurology
1955	Forensic Medicine	1956	Orthopaedics
1954	Biochemistry		
1984	Epidemiology		
1994	Social Medicine		
2000	Immunobiology and Human Genetics		

Stomatology remained a part of the Faculty of Medicine until 1979. Then it was separated and became an independent Faculty of Stomatology as a constitutive part of UCMS. However, the professors of the Faculty of Medicine continued to be actively involved in the process of education and collaboration in all areas of mutual interests.

In October 1977, the faculty of Pharmacy was established at the UCMS in Skopje. In the name of rationalization of the higher education in Socialistic Republic of Macedonia, in 1985 the Faculty of Pharmacy was reorganized and became a Department of Pharmacy of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje.

The entire look and structure of the Medical Faculty, the three Institute buildings of the pre-clinical disciplines, 11 buildings for clinical institutions, a library, amphitheatres, laboratories, polyclinic units and other institutions were completed during the first 40 years of development and work.

In only 40 years of work of the Medical Faculty, a diploma for a medical doctor was attained by 5000 doctors. In the next 10 years, the number increased for 2131 graduated doctors. In 60 years there are 9386 graduated medical doctors and 350 radiological technologists at the Medical Faculty. During the first 40 years, 121 doctors have attained habilitation, while 129 doctors have attained PhD diplomas.

### 1988-1997 year

In 1982 the enlargement of the Clinics for Sur-

gery began. However, due to various unsolved problems, the work was considerably delayed and the building was finished in 1992 (Fig. 5).

In April 1996, the Macedonian Parliament reached a decision to establish a University clinical



Fig. 4: In 1978 started enlarging of the Institute for Transfusion (top), Clinic of Hematology (middle), and Clinic for Children Psychiatry (bottom)

centre as a public health institution, constituted according to the Public Health Law. Since the newly established Clinical Centre was not under jurisdiction of the Medical Faculty, the clinics comprised the teaching basis at the Faculty. As the clinics performed almost 2/3 of the educational, scientific, research and the top-priority public practice, many problems were created in the functioning of this institution.

In 1997 year, for theoretical and practical teaching and scientific work, the Faculty of Medicine comprised of 25 Clinics; 14 Institutes; 11 educational bases; 6 amphitheatres and teaching rooms; library with 2 reading rooms. The staff involved included 78 full professors; 86 professors; 24 associate professors; 38 research fellows; and 432 assistants organized in 28 chairs (cathedras). There were 238 Philosophy Doctors and 115 Masters of Sciences.

#### *1998-2007 year*

The gradual implementation and development of the three integral branches of the Faculty of medicine in Skopje (education, science and healthcare) during the 50 year period 1947 – 1996, was sparse with a legislation of a single Law for cessation of activities of the Faculty of Medicine. Eventual improvement of the situation at the clinics and institutes brought by the legislation changes would justify them as brave and visionary, but if they produce the opposite effect (as was the case in the last 12 years) will present a start in a series of disorganization of the structure, activities and personal lives of thousands employees, doctors, healthcare workers and students in Republic of Macedonia.

In the same time, the Supreme court of Republic of Macedonia decided on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2001 to abolish the Statute of the Institutes of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje.

It should be emphasized however, that apart from the problems arising from the new legislation, the Deans office, the Cathedras, Commissions, and other different committees worked and acted with highest possible responsibility with institutions, individuals and between themselves. This attitude contributed for calm and productive academic environment, allowing uninterrupted flow of academic work at the Faculty.

Importantly, in this period the construction of the new Dean's offices began, the basement was finished in December, 2002, and the rest of the building was finished by October, 2007 (see: front cover). The new building encompassed modern offices for the

administration and also a wonderful amphitheater with 200 seats (Fig. 6).

This was the period when the educational plan and programme for the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was implemented. Important adjustments of the structure, schedule, regiment and quantity of lectures were made, some new subjects were included, and new ways of examination of students were introduced according to the Bologna declaration. In October 2005, the first generation of medical students started their ECTS curriculum. After 6 years of studying they will attain the title medical doctor. In 2007, the 3-year graduate courses for medical technicians, radiologists, physiatrist technicians and logopedists were introduced, all of them compatible to the ECTS.

Much to surprise, in the 60-year monography of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, only a short description of the Cathedras was included, while the organizational structure neglected (31). This is the first attempt of denial of the real Medical Faculty structure, since in all the previous monographies all the organizational subjects (clinics, institutes and educational bases) were presented (26, 27, 30).

In the same period, a compilation of 120 important documents regarding the 60 years history of the Faculty in chronological order was published. These documents whiteness the changes and the development of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje (32, 34).

For the successful work during the past 60 years the President of Republic of Macedonia, m-r Branko Crvenkovski awarded the Faculty of Medicine with the highest national medal.

Through various forms of continuous education,



*Fig. 5: Clinics for Surgery were expanded and standardized in the new building finished in 1992.*

training courses, seminars, congresses, and professional development the Medical Faculty in the past 60 years, continuously cooperates with doctors' associations and organizations (29). The staff at the Medical Faculty, as experts, takes part in different committees in the Doctors' chamber and the Macedonian doctors' association (35).

## Development of education

### *Educational plans and programs*

The Medical Faculty in Skopje started the 6 year (12 semesters) curriculum in 1947 with 41 studied subject and total of 6015 classes. In the next 1948/49 academic year, the educational plan was shortened to 10 semesters, with 28 – 37 subject and total of 3.855 (year 1959/60) to 5.460 (year 1948/49). The ratio theory/praxis has always been in favour of theoretical lectures, although around 50% (Table 2).

In 1993 6-year curriculum was implemented again, with 37 subjects and total of 4725 classes. The ratio theory/praxis was again around 50% (28). The ECTS curriculum started in October 2005, and since only the first 3 years are completed by now, it can not be compared to the previous ones (33).

**Table 2: Educational plans and programs of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia.**

Plan and program	Semesters	Number of subjects	Number of classes		
			Lectures	Exercises	Total
1947	12	41	3450	2565	6015
1948/49	10	37	3255	2205	5460
1952/53	10	28	2520	2130	4650
1959/60	10	28	1830	2025	3855
1964/65	10	34	2730	2340	5160
1967/68	10	35	2565	2460	5025
1973/74	10	36	2775	2610	5385
1979/80	10	32	2565	2520	5085
1982/83	10	33	2265	2145	4410
1993	12	37	2377	2348	4725

### *Number of students*

The number of the newly enrolled students in the Faculty of Medicine varied during the time. In the first 20 years, it varied from 120 to 220, while between 1967 and 1971, there were 250 students per year. In the following 8 years (from 1972 to 1980) the number reached 350-400. Since this hyper-production of doctors overreached the needs of the Republic of Macedonia, in the following period the number of students decreased, first to 250 (in 1980 and 1981), and in the next period it was stabilized from 130 to 150 students per year. In the recent years, the number of the newly enrolled students shows a tendency of growth.



*Fig. 6: New administrative building of the Faculty of Medicine was finished in October, 2007.*

### *Postgraduate studies*

The role of the Medical Faculty as a university institution does not end with the graduate programs. In order to educate staff with profound knowledge from different branches of medicine, in 1973, postgraduate studies were introduced at the Medical Faculty. After completing their studies and given a public elaboration of their thesis, the students acquired a title Master of Sciences (MSc) in medicine. In the first 40 years this title was attained by 55 candidates, after 50 years MSc was attained by 112 doctors. Today, MSc in different branches of medicine is attained by 315 students, and at present there are 160 active students.

In 2003 postgraduate studies in public health were introduced at the Faculty of Medicine, 5 students have attained the MSc diploma in this field, and 110 students have been enrolled since. These studies represent the core for the future-planned School for Public Health.

### *Specializations and subspecializations*

At the Faculty of Medicine there are also specialized postgraduate studies, i.e. specializations and subspecializations in different fields of medicine. Until 1987, over 2300 doctors have specialized in different fields. This was made possible at the Faculty of Medicine thanks to over 550.000 performed outpatient and polyclinic check-ups, and hospitalized 45.000 patients a year. The number of specialists and subspecialists in 1997 was 3.430. From that period on, other 2.380 doctors successfully completed the specialization and 700 more are in process.

## Teaching staff

The Faculty of Medicine started its educational activities in 1947 with 19 lecturers. Forty years after (in 1987) the teaching staff grew around 24 times (to total of 467) of which 432 were assistants. The pick of employed teaching staff was reached in 1997 with total of 696 people of which 432 were assistants. During the next 10 years the number of assistants has fallen to 215, while the number of professors has almost doubled from 78 to 125 (Table 3).

There are several reasons for the sudden decrease of the number of assistants from 1997 to 2007. The implementation of new conditions required for PhD studies enrolment (publishing of 4 papers as first author); the short period considered for change to this "more restrictive" procedure for PhD enrolment; decreased interest in being assistant for symbolic financial reimbursement; migration of staff towards private institutions; and lack of adequate support for production of quality PhDs are some of the main reasons.

**Table 3: Teaching staff at the Faculty of Medicine, University "Ss Kiril and Metodij", Skopje, Republic of Macedonia.**

Title	1947	1987	1997	2007
Regular professor	5	35	78	125
Associate professor	3	45	86	71
Assistant professor	8	58	24	36
Research associate	/	/	38	37
Titular professor	/	/	/	13
Assistant	3	329	432	215
Professional colaborator	/	/	38	/
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>497</b>

On the other hand, the increase of the number of full professors results from the hyperproduction of PhDs in the past period and loose criteria for promotion to professors.

The number of honoured, visiting and PhD professors from abroad that take part in the teaching and practical work of the Faculty is increasing.

## Development of science

Until the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine in 1947, the medical scientific research in Republic of Macedonia was hardly present. The only research activity was presented by the therapeutic findings arising from the practical work at the clinics consisting the core of the Faculty. An exception is the Hygiene

Institute, where planned, well designed studies were performed dealing with endemic diseases (such as malaria). Some of these studies were done in cooperation with European preventive institutions..

This situation did not change much soon after the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine, since the rear teaching staff was mainly involved in education of students, so, the scientific work was under-represented. Beside this, the overall modest situation and lack of facilities in the clinics and institutes did not allow scientific work. As the time passed, the number, as well the quality of the scientific work increases. In the beginning, the papers are published in Macedonian and Yugoslavian journals, and the clinical observations soon are replaced with research results from theoretical Cathedras, such as Pathology and Pharmacology. It was after 1960, when organized and planned scientific work was introduced. Until 1967, total of 1527 papers have been published, mainly in domestic journals (25).

In 1987, 40 years after the foundation of the Medical Faculty, 480 people are involved in scientific work, which represents about 8,8% of the total scientific potential in Socialist Republic of Macedonia. Assistants represent 69.9% which indicates the high motivation of young staff. A number of international fellowships were available in this period for specialization abroad.

In the sixties, scientific projects begin to appear. Since 1971, the financing of the scientific projects is governed by the Public Fund for scientific work of the Republic of Macedonia, and after 1991, by the Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Macedonia. There are few projects financed by foreign institutions and funds.

Certainly big influence on the scientific medical work in Macedonia had the PhD these, despite the limitation due to publishing only in Macedonian language.

Today, after 60 years of work, a PhD is attained by 463 candidates, and 93 are in process. From the following 2008/2009 school year, introduction of the latest three-year PhD studies in accordance with the most recent world recommendations and trends are being planned at the Faculty of Medicine.

## Development of health care

With the foundation of the Faculty of Medicine, the Zemska hospital in Skopje was closed. The entire

personnel and routine were transferred to the new institution.

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1971, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia introduced a law defining the duties and rights of the Faculty of Medicine in the healthcare. In 1987, in 17 clinics and 6 institute the healthcare was practiced. The total capacities were 2000 hospital beds, 158 specialist and subspecialist ambulatories, 7 clinical laboratories and 40 cabinets, while 556 doctors specialists and 1218 medical and 740 non-medical staff were included in the routine work. The inhabitants of Kosovo and southern Serbia were often seeking help in the Medical Faculty in Skopje.

In April 1996, the University Clical Center was introduced. Since the newly formed Clinical Center dissociated from the Faculty the different clinics became educational bases of the faculty.

On the other hand, the ambulatory-polyclinic activities at the Institutes remained to be part of Medical Faculty.

## Seeds for the future

The beginning of all activities is often the most difficult part of the development with a lot of struggles, personal scarifications, cleaning of the wild environments and similar. We have to remember and keep in memories the beginnings from the past sixty years.

First Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia (from 1947 till 1950 year) was Prof. Dr. Sterijo Bozdov (born January 7, 1902 in Krushevo).

First Index (Index Lectionum) was given to

Zarovski Hristov Gjorgji, born March 8, 1924 in Bitola, dated September 27, 1947 year.

First lecture at the Faculty of Medicine was given by associate professor Dr. Zdenko Krizhan from the Institute of Anatomy at October 30, 1947 with the title "The shape and composition of organs in relation with the attributes present only in the humans".

First Diploma for the Doctor of Medicine was given to Cvetko Arsov, born February 2, 1927 in Titov Veles.

First Habilitation at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje was defended in 1954 year by Dr. Dimitar Arsov with the title "The effect of intravenous epinephrine on the hypersplenism in malaria and kala-azar".

First PhD at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje was defended in May 17, 1958 year by Dr. Radovan Perchinkovski with the title "The role of electrophoresis in the cardiovascular diseases".

First PhD defended outside of the Faculty of Medicine was "Adsorptional characteristics of alkaloids and hydratation effects of alakaloids (morphin, codein, tebain and papaverin) on macromolecular systems in electrical and resorption field at different pH values" by Nada Chumbeljkj (Belgrade: Faculty of Pharmacy, 1965).

First Master of Science (MSc) at the Faculty of Medicine was defended in November 18, 1976 year by Dr. Katica Zafirovska with the title "Balance of liquids and electrolites in renal insufficiency".

First Master of Science defended outside the Faculty of Medicine was "Toxicological efekct of hydrargirum in the machineries of electrolysis" by Dr. Vladimir Cvetanov (Zagreb: Faculty of Medicine, March 17, 1970).



*Fig. 7: At the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia Acad. Dr. Dimitar Arsov (1952-1974) defended first Habilitation degree in 1954 (left); Prof. Dr. Radovan Perchinkovski (1922-1996) defended first Philosophy Doctor degree in 1958 (middle); and Prof. Dr. Katica Zafirovska (1946-) defended first Master of Science degree in 1976 (right).*

## The Year-book of the Faculty of Medicine

The first volume of the journal "Year-book of the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje [Godishen zbornik na Medicinskiot fakultet vo Skopje]" was published in 1954. Its first Editor-in-chief was Prof. Dr. Veljko Bujan, and the Faculty of Medicine was the publisher. It publishes research and professional papers of the people mainly employed at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje. The number of articles was unlimited and they were written in Macedonian and other languages (Serbian, French, English, Russian or German) (??).

Starting from 1964 the chairman of the Editorial Board was Prof. Dr. Avram Sadikario. He was Editor-in-chief of the journal in continuity from 1965 to 1985. During his engagement there were certain minor changes in the editing and publishing of the journal.

From 1979 International Number for Serial Publications was quoted (ISSN 0065-1214), the format of the journal was uniform, it was published once a year in Macedonian with abstracts in English, for the first time Index of authors was included, and also Guidelines for authors. From 1981 onwards, the journal changed its A4 format and the design of its cover. From 1982 to 1986 the journal appeared with two issues per year.

In 1986 Prof. Dr. Momchilo Lazarevski became editor-in-chief of the journal. The articles and papers were now proof-read and language-edited, both in Macedonian and English. From 1988 the contents began to be printed bilingually (Macedonian and English in two parallel columns).

With volume 43(1-2) in 1999 the journal was renamed the Macedonian Journal of Medicine with new editor-in-chief Prof. Dr. Mirko Spiroski. Another new feature was the complete electronic delivery of the material for review, editing and printing. After a two year interval, volume 47 was published in 2001 as a double issue and Prof. Dr. Zoran Guchev was the new editor-in-chief.

## Medical students organization

The Macedonian medical student's association (MMSA) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which unites all the students from School of Medicine and other similar schools in Republic of Macedonia.

The foundation of MSA dates back in the time of formation of the School of Medicine in Skopje, in 1947, when first generations of students were organized in so

called "people's youth". In 1948 they all joined together in a single organization "People's youth of Yugoslavia.

In May 1951, in Belgrade, the founding assembly of the Yugoslavian student's association took place, followed by the founding assembly of the students of the School of medicine in Skopje. For more than 20 years, the MSA keeps this organizational form. The medical students at the School of Medicine in Skopje began with scientific work in 1953, when the first Call for scientific works was published. There were 5 works proposed by students: Borislav Karanfilski, Nikola Serafimov, Danica Milchin, Dragoljub Lebeda and Ljube Damjanovski. Starting from 1959, a congress for medical students from Yugoslavia is established. The scientific work of the medical students is later organized in the scientific club "Akad. Dimitar Arsov" through which, every year scientific congresses with international participation are organized.

In 1974, after joining together of the Student's Association and Association of the Yugoslavian youth in a single organization, Association of socialist youth of Yugoslavia, the MSA underwent structural changes, which resulted in formation of multiple individual organizations joined into Action Conference of MMSA.

In 1991, after Macedonia became an independent country, the alliance transforms into Association of the students from the Medical School in Skopje. In 1998, according to the present at that time legislative, the Association is renamed into Macedonian medical student's association (MMSA) and keeps this name until present. MMSA is a member of the Student's alliance of the University St. Kiril i Metodija in Skopje, and a member of the international federation of medical students associations (IFMSA). This membership helps providing numerous professional and elective student exchanges in countries from all over the world (a record of 110 realized exchanges in 2006/07).

The MMSA vision is creation of a medical student educated according to the highest European standards for medical education and a future doctor with highly developed responsibility and ethics to patients and colleagues.

Every year, many professors, associated professors and assistant professors participate in MMSA activities, thus contributing to the overall quality of the MMSA work.

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