

Ukraine Medics & Healthcare Workers *Trained To Treat War Victims*

A researcher from Coventry University has played her part in the humanitarian effort in Ukraine by training healthcare workers and rehabilitation specialists as they care for those injured and impacted by the war with Russia.

From the very moment the invasion began, Dr Agnieszka Lewko, Assistant Professor at Coventry University's Research Centre for Healthcare and Communities, wanted to do something to help. In less than a month she reached out and collaborated with other experts to host an online course in first aid for medics and healthcare workers on the ground in Ukraine. The course was arranged through a collaboration with the Ukrainian Physical Therapists Association and Ukrainian Society of Ergotherapists and was soon followed by live webinars in amputee management and rehabilitation.

A programme for physiotherapists working in intensive care units was then developed as part of the charitable foundation Patients of Ukraine's War Trauma Rehabilitation in Ukraine Initiative.

This resulted in Dr Lewko and other healthcare professionals visiting the city of Lviv to host two days of practical training, before a group of 12 physiotherapists and rehabilitation leaders from Ukraine visited Coventry University.

They took part in simulation training on physiotherapy in intensive care and attended an 'excellence symposium' organised by the Centre for Care Excellence for Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health – a collaboration between Coventry University and University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) – as well as a clinical visit to the hospital.

CLINICAL PRACTICE COLLABORATION

The Ukrainian visitors also presented their own work at a symposium organised by the Coventry University's



Physiotherapists and rehabilitation specialists from Ukraine taking part in simulation training in an intensive care setting at Coventry University.

Research Centre for Healthcare and Communities. Dr Lewko said that the unexpected outbreak of the invasion on Ukraine created a feeling of disbelief and shock to see pictures of civilian casualties.

"From this, collaborations emerged through education, clinical practice, leadership and research which eventually saw us supporting rehabilitation specialists in Ukraine online and visiting



Dr Agnieszka Lewko, Assistant Professor at Coventry University's Research Centre for Healthcare and Communities, pictured with Ukrainian physiotherapists and rehabilitation specialists during a training exercise.

Ukraine to provide practical training, before a group of Ukrainian physiotherapists came here.

"The last two years have showed that we are stronger together; leaders in education, clinical practice and research supporting our Ukrainian rehabilitation colleagues to improve patients' care in this horrendous situation. We learned a lot from each other through this journey and continue working together to improve patients' care and access to high-quality rehabilitation globally."

'Patients of Ukraine' is focusing on developing the infrastructure for all healthcare facilities and rebuilding some facilities damaged or destroyed since the war began. With support of international collaborators, the organisation can also focus on the accessibility and availability of medical and rehabilitation equipment, and not just drugs.

Leading the Patients of Ukraine's War Trauma Rehabilitation in Ukraine initiative, Anastasiia Boichuk says that the number of children born prematurely has doubled since the war started, meaning there is a much bigger number of children now needing rehabilitation and not only because of war trauma but because of war itself.

"We're extremely grateful for the support from Dr Lewko and Coventry University. With this help we should be able to expand our network of rehabilitation service providers, develop our workforce and help to improve and develop the existing rehabilitation professionals. We will also be able to continue and develop our research projects," she said.

For further information on the Patients of Ukraine initiative visit <https://patients.org.ua/en/>