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System of Training and Certification of Military-Medical Personnel in Ukraine Armed Forces

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When Ukraine was proclaimed as an independent State, a national system for military-medical education was established. In the early nineties, the conceptual approaches and the structural model for the military-medical personnel training was developed. The tasks, organization, and principles of functioning of the Ukrainian Military-Medical Academy (UMMA) were determined and approved. By that time, there were 34 military educational institutions dislocated in Ukraine, but none of these was engaged in the training of military physicians, or in research in military medicine. All institutions working in these areas were historically situated in the Russian Federation.

In 1992, initial legislative measures were taken by the government of Ukraine relating to the foundation of the UMMA. First of all, the training of military-medical specialists was recognized as one of the basic tasks of the National medical university. Then, the Government took the important decision to establish the Military Medical Department (MMD) as a part of this University.

Undergraduate training, postgraduate training and specialization of military physicians and provisors meeting the State standards were set as the paramount tasks for the MMD. A no less important objective was the postgraduate training of military-medical managers and administrators of the Ministry of Defense, of specialists of civil health institutions working in the field of the State defense and security as well as of the medical corps of the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

An essential part of the MMD's activities referred to the organization and implementation of fundamental and applied research in the field of military medicine. The first students were admitted to the MMD in 1993.

Next, the Ukraine Military Medical Academy was founded on the base of the MMD as an independent training, research, methodical and information center of military-medical service. The present organization structure of the UMMA is shown in figures 1 and 2.

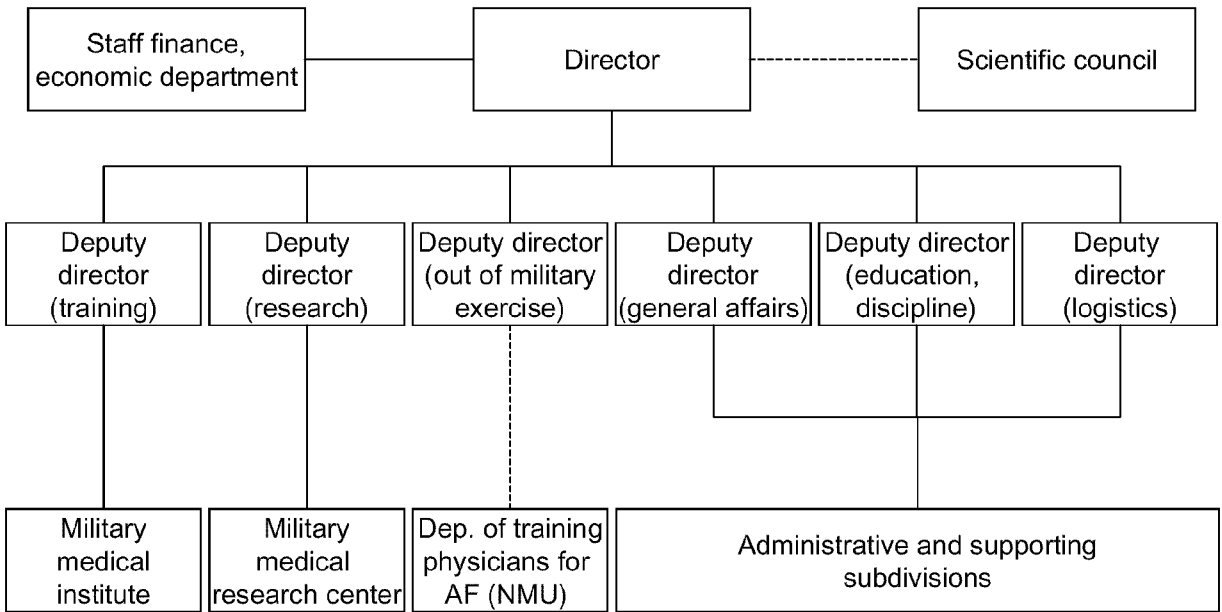


Figure 1. Ukrainian military-medical academy organizational structure

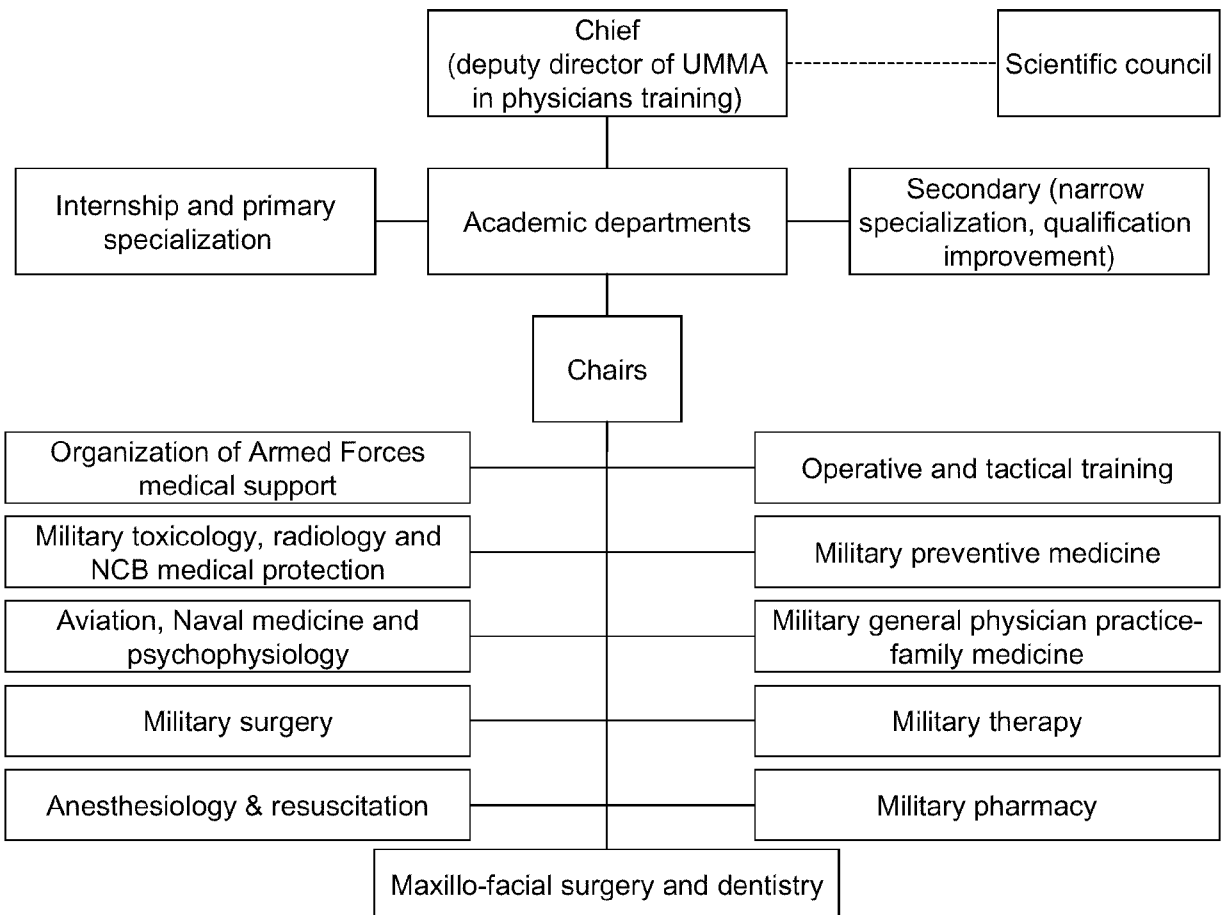


Figure 2. UMMA military-medical institute organizational structure.

Along with the foundation of the UMMA the Ukraine government took two other important decisions concerning the military medical education. The first decision was to introduce compulsory training in military and emergency medicine for students and newly graduated internship physicians of civil medical universities and attendants of institutes of postgraduate physicians training. Chairs of emergency and military medicine have been founded at these institutions.

The second governmental decision was to complete the military medical educational system with two additional components. The undergraduate training of military physicians at the Training Department of Military Physicians for the Armed Forces of Ukraine was established on the base of the National Medical University, and an appropriate department for assistants physicians training was opened at Vinnitsa Medical College.

Presently five interconnected elements of military-medical personnel training have been implemented:

1. Basic high education, with pre-draft training and personnel orientation – general high school, military lyceum, and nurse school;
2. Undergraduate medical education to obtain the medical doctor diploma – Training Department of Military Physicians for the Armed Forces of the National Medical University;
3. Undergraduate medical education, with courses on Emergency and Military medicine to obtain a medical doctor diploma and the military rank of reserved officer – medical universities of III-IV level of accreditation;
4. The Ukraine Military-Medical Academy – postgraduate military physicians training and specialization;
5. Training of military physician assistants – Vinnitsa Medical College.

The main tasks of Ukraine Military Medical Academy fall into six categories:

1. Postgraduate medical education. It is realized through 2-3-year internship combining with primary (wide) specialization. The latter includes ten basic specialties: general practice, general surgery, internal medicine, anesthesiology, stomatology, pharmacy, epidemiology, hygiene, etc. This stage of physician training is normally completed with a State certification which is equivalent to the license in the Western system of medical education.
2. Selected training on 2-3-year magisterial course for talented graduates. This course is a combination of clinical training and research, and if the candidate passes the complex examinations successfully, he will receive a magister diploma and a medical specialist certificate.
3. Postgraduate (each 5 years) advanced training courses lasting 1-3 months, with a 1-month pre-course exercise, followed by an examination. These course was set up to confirm existing or to get higher a physician qualification degree. Therefore, it is mandatory for each medical doctor.
4. Secondary or narrow specialization in one of the 106 military-medical specialties (ophthalmology, urology, neurosurgery, cardiology, etc.). To obtain a certificate in any of these specialties, the candidate should pass through special advanced course (10 months for a surgeon and up to 6 months for an internist

and a preventive medicine specialist) and a certifying examination which is held at the Military-Medical Academy, the Main Military Clinical Hospital or one of the medical departments of the operative commands.

5. Adjunct research (3-year study, a pre-admission and a post-admission profile examination, preparation of a thesis). This program is completed by defending a thesis at a specialized scientific council of authorized institutes, universities or academies, and a candidate of the medical sciences degree is obtained.

6. Courses for Doctor of Medicine are open to candidates of the medical sciences who have at least five years served as a physician or researcher. After completion of a 3-year research program, the scholar has to defend his doctoral thesis at an authorized specialized council.

Graduates of the medical colleges are distributed to serve as assistant physicians at garrisons or other military-medical facilities. After three years of service, they obtain the right to be admitted to the third year course of the National Medical University with a follow-up postgraduate training at the Military-Medical Academy.

In summary, the system of military-medical education has been legally established in Ukraine. The system functions in full accordance with the current the State legislation standardized credentials and privileges. It is closely integrated into the State system of medical education as its specific and organic component.

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