



Press release
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Voting for the Annual Prize in Medicine 2020 is Open

This year, the most celebrated event of the Latvian healthcare sector, the Annual Prize in Medicine, will take place the 11th time, and the ceremony will be broadcast on TV3 on 27 March. The Latvian Medical Association (LMA) calls for the public to honour the medical professionals and cast a vote for the best medics of the year in Latvia. The voting will take place online at www.arstubiedriba.lv/gadabalvamedicina from 25 January to 1 March.

"To be a medic, to serve life and people daily and during crises is a mission that every worker of the healthcare sector promises to follow. Therefore, everyone working in healthcare in this country deserves the greatest respect and gratitude in these hard times – they have demonstrated admirable moral and physical strength in guard for public health. Among them are heroes – some visible, but most of them unnoticed – who widen the boundaries of medical science and practice with their work, taking the standards of humaneness to the next level. These are the people who deserve to the Annual Prize in Medicine", says **Ilze Aizsilniece, President of LMA**.

This year, the Annual Prize in Medicine will be awarded in 14 nominations. Members of the general public can vote for his/her candidate in nine nominations: General Practitioner of the Year; Specialist of the Year; Dentist of the Year; Physician Assistant of the Year; Pharmacist of the Year, Nurse of the Year, Midwife of the Year, Functional Specialist of the Year and Hospital of the Year.

Kirovs Lipmans, Chairman of the Board of the pharmaceutical company Grindeks says: "For many years, *Grindeks* has been collaborating with LMA and supporting the Annual Prize in Medicine, which appraises the healthcare sector. As the producer of medicine, we consider it an honour to thank those taking care of our health, the dearest that a human being has. Healthcare of Latvia can take pride in its outstanding specialists who do their job professionally, responsibly, with love and respect for those whom they help."

Following the tradition, the Annual Prize in Medicine will be awarded also in the nominations Junior Doctor of the Year, Personality of the Year in Medicine, Event of the Year in Medicine and Annual Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Medicine. The winners in these nominations are chosen by an LMA expert vote. The winners in the nominations Professor of the Year are determined by the vote of medical students of Rīga Stradiņš University and the University of Latvia.

"Our medics form one of the cornerstones of the healthcare system and, consequently, are at the foundations of public and individual health. A number of

surveys suggest that genuine gratitude is a strong motivator. We are happy to be a part of such an important event and proudly praise the input of our doctors, nurses and other healthcare specialists. Their wellbeing is of utmost importance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, I call upon everyone to contribute their "Thank you" by casting a vote and thus expressing the well-deserved appreciation to our favourite specialists," says **Gundars Bērziņš, Chairman of the Board of the pharmaceutical company Olainfarm.**

The Annual Prize in Medicine is organised by LMA in collaboration with the Ministry of Healthcare of Latvia, Latvian Junior Doctors Association and Latvian Nurses Association with the participation of the University of Latvia and Rīga Stradiņš University. The general sponsors of the event are the pharmaceutical companies Grindeks and Olainfarm, other supporters include the pharmaceutical company Silvanols, medical companies Veselības centrs 4, MFD Veselības grupa and Centrālā Laboratorija.

About the Annual Prize in Medicine

The Prize was first awarded in 2008, and has gained prominence ever since. Today, it is the most prestigious award in healthcare in Latvia with an increasing public involvement in honouring the best Latvian medics – propositions for the nomination candidates are received even from abroad. Due to the economic crisis of 2008/2009, the Prize was not awarded in 2010, but the tradition was renewed in 2012. Last year, almost nine thousand people took part in the vote, and the Prize was awarded in 14 nominations. The author of the Prize figurine is the metal sculptor Armands Jēkabsons.

About LMA

The Latvian Medical Association (LMA) was established in 1988 with an aim to improve the national healthcare system and to protect doctors' legal, professional and economic interests. Among other goals of LMA are the improvement of medical education system, promotion of the principles of medical ethics among doctors and the control of their observation, as well as the improvement of public health in general. LMA collaborates with its counterparts in Lithuania and Estonia, and the Baltic-German Medical Association. LMA is the member of the World Medical Association (WMA), the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS). LMA representatives take part in the parliamentary discussions on the development of new legislation by submitting proposals and recommendations. The Association collaborates with the Ministry of Healthcare of Latvia in developing new legislative acts that directly concern professional issues. Members of LMA participate in the Strategic Council and the Body of Chief Specialists of the Ministry of Healthcare. Other cooperation partners include the Health Inspectorate, Centre for Healthcare Economics and other subordinate bodies of the Ministry of Health, as well as the medical professional associations like the Latvian Junior Doctors Association, the Latvian Nurses Association and the Pharmacists Society of Latvia.

For more information, please contact:

Evija Ansonska
Head of Communication of LMA
Phone: (00371) 26011887
E-mail: evija.ansonka@gmail.com

Ilze Aizsilniece
President of LMA
E-mail: ilze.aizsilniece@arstubiedriba.lv