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Press Release

Alarming drop in transplantations in Greece

In the last three years, the number of transplantations in Greece has been dropping at an alarming rate, with tragic consequences for patients needing transplants. In 2012 the rate of transplantations was 7 per one million citizens, while in 2001 it was 7.2. It is the worst rate the country has faced in the last 12 years. The causes for this situation, which has taken its toll on human lives that could have been saved, are attributed to the outdated legislative framework, as well as the negative preconceptions among a large part of the population, despite the progress that has been achieved.

These issues were highlighted during a scientific discussion on the topic “The future of transplantations in Greece”, which took place on Thursday May 9, 2012 at MITERA General Hospital. The scientific meeting was organized by the 1st Internal Medicine Clinic of MITERA Hospital and the invited speakers were three internationally-acclaimed Greek scientists.

The first speaker was Dr Andreas Tzakis, who is considered an authority in the area of liver/kidney/pancreatic and intestinal transplants in the USA. Dr Tzakis resides permanently in the USA and is the Director of the Miami Transplant Center, which he has founded. The second speaker was Dr Dimitrios Gakis, Director of the Solid Organ Transplant Center at the Ippokratio General Hospital in Thessaloniki, and considered a leader in major surgery and solid organ transplant surgery. Dr Gakis acts as the Greek representative on transplant issues at the EU and the European Council. The last speaker was Dr Petros Alivizatos, who is among the leading cardiothoracic surgeons in the world and has been established internationally as the heart transplant surgeon with the highest success rate, which exceeds the international average. Dr Alivizatos is also the founder of the Heart Transplant Unit at the Onassis Cardiac Surgery Center.

Dr Eleftheria Krikeli, the coordinator of the scientific meeting and Director of the 1st Internal Medicine Clinic at MITERA Hospital, noted, “In my triple capacity as a Greek citizen, a mother with hand-on experience and a doctor in a hospital as prestigious as MITERA, I should and am obligated to feel concerned and seek valid answers to vital questions with serious social

implications, such as the future of transplant surgery in Greece. Therefore, I consider that MITERA Hospital rose to the challenge and demonstrated considerable sensitivity to the imperative need to raise the social question of transplants. I solemnly believe that this day will become a milestone in the constant struggle to find even better ways to improve and restructure a highly sophisticated transplant system, in accordance with international standards.”