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## REVIEW ARTICLE

# VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT OF UKRAINIAN STUDENTS IN THE FIELD OF MEDICAL AID, EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS (END OF THE XIX – 30S OF THE XX CENTURY)

DOI: 10.36740/WLek202211223

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## ABSTRACT

**The aim** is to analyze the leading directions of volunteer activity of Ukrainian students in the field of medical, social assistance, education of children, youth and adults in Galicia (end of the 19th – 30s of the 20th century).

**Materials and methods:** The study uses a number of scientific methods: chronological, historical, specific search, content analysis – provide selection, analysis of the source base, allow to identify general trends, directions of development, achievements and gaps of the Ukrainian student movement in Galicia in the field of medical, social care, education and enlightenment of children and adults in the late XIX – 30s of the XX century; extrapolation and actualization – focus on creative thinking, adaptation and use of this historical experience under the current conditions.

**Conclusions:** Voluntary activity of Ukrainian students (end of the 19th – 30s of the 20th century) is an interesting peculiar phenomenon not only in national, but also in European history, which has real achievements and deserves a scientific and theoretical understanding from the standpoint of today. Student volunteer experience in the field of social and medical protection of children and adults, education, cultural development, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, dissemination of sanitary and hygienic knowledge, medical counseling can be useful and instructive now, when Ukraine is fighting against the Russian aggressor. We outline the volunteer activity of students who belonged to the “*Medychna hromada*” society (1910-1944) as a national phenomenon of the organization of public medical care of the population of Galicia, which has no analogue in the history of Ukrainian medicine. It is primarily about a high degree of civic self-awareness, patriotism, self-sacrifice for the benefit of the Ukrainian people, the provision of medical services to low-income sections of the population, widows, orphans, disabled people, veterans of the Great War, medical care of children and youth, etc. – all this inspires modern doctors who provide assistance to soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, wounded in hospitals, internally displaced persons, etc.

**KEY WORDS:** Ukrainian student societies, medical assistance, volunteering, social care, training of the future doctor

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## INTRODUCTION

During the second half of the 19th and 20th centuries the organized activity of Ukrainian students was part of the nationwide movement, an important factor in cultural and educational work, medical and social care of children, youth and adults, the movement for the preservation of the health of Ukrainians, the formation of national consciousness, etc., the struggle for the independence of Ukraine, etc. Nowadays, armed Ukrainian students defend the integrity of Ukraine's borders, fight against the Russian enemy for the independence of the state, provide sanitary and medical assistance, actively participate in the volunteer movement, and engage in charitable activities. The forms and methods of public activity of Ukrainian students changed at different stages of the historical development of Ukraine, depending on socio-political, socio-economic, cultural and educational conditions, state power, government systems, etc., but

the key basis of the Ukrainian student movement during the 19th-21st centuries is that it always had a nationally oriented character, was a component of national revival, an active participant in the cultural, educational, social, medical, and health care movement of Ukrainians, went beyond narrow professional problems.

Despite the fact that scientists (I. Bilavych [1], K. Brozek [2], Y. Ganitkevych [3], I. Gurak [4], R. Kovalyuk [5], B. Savchuk [6], etc.) are actively researching the activities of Ukrainian public associations in Galicia, in particular the development of the student movement in the 19th-20th centuries, but in science there has not been a comprehensive study of the participation of Ukrainian students in the volunteer movement regarding the medical and social care of children, youth and adults, the development of public education in Galicia at the end of the 19th – in the 30s of the 20th century.

## THE AIM

The aim is to analyze the leading directions of volunteer activity of Ukrainian students in the field of medical, social assistance, education of children, youth and adults in Galicia (end of the 19th – 30s of the 20th century).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study uses a number of scientific methods: chronological, historical, specific search, content analysis – provide selection, analysis of the source base, allow to identify general trends, directions of development, achievements and gaps of the Ukrainian student movement in Galicia in the field of medicine, of social care, education and enlightenment of children and adults in the late XIX – 30s of the XX century; extrapolation and actualization focus on creative thinking, adaptation and use of this historical experience under the current conditions.

## REVIEW

Organized forms (clubs, societies, organizations, associations, etc.), participation of students in public, socio-political, cultural and educational life, struggle for the sake of Ukraine by the parts of military formations, etc. are considered to be the Ukrainian student movement [4; 5; 6]. During the studied period, studentship played the role of a generator of the national idea, a catalyst of national and social processes; factors that influenced the development of the Ukrainian medical and educational movement, the struggle for the health of children, youth and adults, etc.

In Galicia, an organized student movement was formed in the middle of the 19th century and was caused by the Ukrainian national revival, the spread of the ideas of romanticism, developed in the legal constitutional field of the Austrian/Austro-Hungarian Empire, which gave grounds for the legal activity of numerous Ukrainian student societies, created the basis for their active involvement in the Ukrainian national movement. The tradition of the student movement, created in the “Austrian” period, determined its important role in subsequent periods, when state policy was less favorable [5]. The spirit of service to national ideals, self-sacrifice, readiness for armed struggle for Ukraine’s independence was cultivated in student centers. Naturally, an important area of activity of Ukrainian students was cultural, educational, medical, health-preserving, social ones; they organized cultural events, educational courses, organized lectures, created dramatic and musical groups, as volunteers worked in the “*Narodna Lichnytsia*” in Lviv, in hospitals, together with doctors they worked benevolently in educational institutions, consulted villagers, provided medical care to children, engaged in medical education, etc.

All this contributed to the active development of the national and public life of Ukrainians not only in Lviv and county towns, but also in the province, in the mountainous regions of the region. Ethnographic expeditions, traveling lectures of Ukrainian students, organized by students who belonged to the societies (“*Sich*” (1867), “*Prosvita*”

(1868), *Naukove tovarystvo named after Shevchenko* (1873), *Rus’ke tovarystvo pedagogichne / Ukrai’ns’ke pedagogichne tovarystvo* (1881), “*Akademichna besida*” (1870), “*Akademichnyj kruzhok*” (1871), “*Druzhnij lyhvar*”/”*Akademichne bratstvo*” (1871), “*Vatra*” (1892), “*Akademichna gromada*” (1896), “*Osnova*” (1897), “*Rus’ka akademichna pomich*”/ “*Ukrai’ns’ka akademichna pomich*” (1902), *Tovarystvo pryhl’nykiv ukrai’ns’koi nauky, literatury i shtuky* (1904), *Tovarystvo naukovykh vykladiv named after P. Mogyly u Lvovi* (1908), “*Ukrai’ns’kyj students’kyj sojuz*” (1909), “*Medychna gromada*” (1910), “*Profus*” (1921), *Tovarystvo pryhl’nykiv knygy in Prague* (1927), etc. Active educational work among the population, especially rural ones, took place during vacations and holidays, when students went home, where they distributed the publication “Enlightenment”, held classes and conversations with villagers, launched large-scale cultural and informational activities, organized libraries, convened meetings, parties, gatherings, organized festive events in honor of T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, historical figures of Ukraine, dedicated to national and religious holidays, carried out anti-alcohol propaganda, created sobriety circles, arranged lectures aimed at sanitary and hygienic education, etc.

Voluntary activity of Ukrainian students of the studied period is an interesting peculiar phenomenon not only in national, but also in European history, which has real achievements, deserves a scientific and theoretical understanding from the standpoint of today, the experience and practice of Ukrainian students in the field of educational, medical, social volunteering can be useful and instructive now, when Ukraine is fighting against the Russian aggressor.

Retrospective analysis of the process of organizational and ideological formation and development of Ukrainian student associations in Galicia at the end of the XIX – in the 30s of the XX century showed that most of them imitated the corresponding models of youth associations of other nations (usually Austria-Hungary, Poland), but under the conditions of the Austrian and later Polish state-political regimes, Ukrainian student associations maintained their autonomy, created numerous centers in the region, developed their own ideological principles and forms and methods of work that corresponded to the possibilities and needs of the social development of Ukraine, its urgent needs.

Therefore, the Ukrainian student body organized its activities on the principle of “national autarky”, which provided for the provision of national social, cultural, educational, material and financial needs based on the Ukrainians’ own resources, it sought to compensate for the gaps in state policy in solving important social problems, in particular in the fields of medical and social care, education, culture, health care and sports. Ukrainian students who belonged to various organizations contributed to the improvement of medical and sanitary-hygienic services for the population, launched a broad struggle for a healthy lifestyle among children, youth and adults, especially regarding the spread of hygienic knowledge, anti-alcohol and anti-nicotine education, promotion of active types sports, etc. In this

sense, they in a certain way compensated, supplemented, and in some cases replaced the activities of the state in the field of public health protection, opposed the policy of increasing alcoholism. Together with other Ukrainian public associations, Ukrainian students contributed to the mass educational movement for the formation of knowledge on the basics of hygiene and sanitation. These facts, as well as the fight against drunkenness, work on maternal and child health care, the ability to consolidate the will and aspirations of Ukrainians in a mass movement for a healthy lifestyle, became not only a real contribution to the preservation of the gene pool of the Ukrainian people, but also demonstrated to European nations and to the whole world the scale of the Ukrainian public movement, which was carried out on a volunteer basis.

Ukrainian medical students wrote a bright page in the development of the public medical movement in Galicia, medical and sanitary-hygienic service and the struggle for a healthy lifestyle for children, youth and adults. During the interwar period, the level of medical care in Galicia remained extremely low. Due to the high cost of services, it was inaccessible to the majority of the Ukrainian population, who, however, lacked elementary knowledge of the basics of hygiene and sanitation. Gaps in the state health care system were compensated by national public institutions (*ULT*, *UHT*, “*Medychna hromada*”, “*Vidrodzhennia*”), which directed efforts to help the least protected groups, in particular the peasantry, students, children, mothers, etc. The same applies to the struggle for a sober lifestyle, anti-alcohol propaganda, because the state pursued a policy of increasing the level of alcohol consumption, especially in “crossroads”. The magazine “*Vidrodzhennia*” as an organ of the anti-alcohol society “*Vidrodzhennia*” (1909) claimed that in the 1930s, Galicia rose to one of the first places in Eastern Europe in terms of anti-alcohol propaganda. The reasons for this were given by the fact that in 1931-1937 Ukrainian magazines published more than 2,000 articles of relevant content [7]. The publication cites numerous facts of the “sobering” of dozens of rural communities, which, in turn, contributed to the improvement of the moral climate and the criminogenic situation in the region. The number of crimes committed on the basis of “drunkenness” decreased; the popularity of “alcohol-free” weddings grew, the practice of holding cultural and educational events without alcohol, etc., strengthened.

The most prominent national public institution of Ukrainians, which provided medical care to the poorest strata of the population, was the “*Narodna Lichnytsia*” (1903), which not only occupied a special place in the structure of the public national movement of Galicia, but was also a kind of evidence of volunteerism at the European level. Thus, during the 1920s, 14-18 Ukrainian doctors worked at the institution on a charitable basis, they treated from 6.5 to 8.3 thousand people on an outpatient or inpatient basis every year. Many of them underwent complex free surgical operations and provided medical treatment. With the participation of medical students, 17-25 thousand examinations and consultations were carried out each year.

Such volunteer activity of doctors of the Lviv “*Narodna Lichnytsia*” in the field of qualified medical care received wide resonance and recognition among the population of Western Ukraine, as well as Eastern Europe: sick people came here for help not only from all over Galicia, but also from Volyn, Kholmshk region, etc. The activities of “*Narodna Lichnytsia*” had a supranational character as in 1924, among the patients of the institution, Ukrainians made up 54.5%, Poles – 33%, Jews – 10%, etc. [8; 9; 10].

Medical students actively contributed to the fight against tuberculosis. Due to the low level of socio-economic life and the lack of a system of sanitary and medical care, various infectious diseases, especially tuberculosis, spread among the population of the region on a threatening scale. During the interwar period, the number of patients with this disease in Ukrainian lands ranged from 200,000 to 250,000, and this figure was 1.5 to 2 times higher than in the central voivodeships of Poland. Every year, 7-10% of patients died, and mostly they were people aged 25-45, and among young Ukrainian children, tuberculosis spread two to three times more actively than among Polish or Jewish children [10].

Therefore, the problem of disease prevention and the formation of the basics of sanitary and hygienic knowledge among children, youth and adults gained special relevance. The fight against tuberculosis was led by the *Ukrayins'ke Hygienichne Tovarystvo (UHT)* (1929), which took as an example the organizational models of European nations, in particular the Poles. Its founders were Ukrainian doctors and medical students, who aimed to promote the basics of hygienic knowledge and popularize the prevention of epidemics and, in particular, tuberculosis. Thanks to the efforts of the well-known doctor, scientist, public figure M. Panchyshyn, as of 1933, the *UHT* grew from 195 people (1929) to 309 people, a third of whom were medical students and specialists with a medical education [11; 12]; and thanks to other public associations (“*Prosvita*”, “*Ridna Shkola*”), branches of *UHT* began to be opened for Greek-Catholic clergy in regional cities, but only six of them were officially active. Ukrainian students worked as volunteers in 6 sections: organizational and propaganda, tuberculosis, anti-alcohol, venereology, physical education, editorial. They actively participated in the examination of more than three dozen villages, whose inhabitants were most affected by infectious diseases. The results of the examinations showed that the main reason (8-10 cases out of ten) of the spread of epidemics was the failure to isolate sick people from healthy people. Important measures were taken by the members of the *UHT* in 1929-1930, when with the help of 35 radiographs purchased by the society, they examined almost a third of the rural communities of Galicia [11; 12]. The educational work of student-volunteers of *UHT* was especially intensified in December, when, on the initiative of the International Anti-tuberculosis Union, it was declared the month of fighting tuberculosis in many European countries.

The next step in the fight against infectious diseases was the organization of mass educational work among children



and adults on the prevention of diseases and the formation of elementary hygienic knowledge. Only during 1929-1931, the members of the *UHT*, mostly medical students, prepared about 80 thematic abstracts, delivered more than 300 lectures, held dozens of lectures that lasted three days. About 40,000 villagers were covered by this massive educational work [8; 11; 12].

## DISCUSSION

It is important to emphasize that Ukrainian students did not have a separate institution of their own, like representatives of other nationalities, until 1905 they belonged to the Polish society "Library of Medicine Listeners" ("*Biblioteka słuchaczy medycyny*"). Since in 1905 Polish students created their own organization – the Medical Society ("*Koło medyków*"), it is natural that Ukrainians followed their example. As of 1910, 30 Ukrainian youths were studying medicine at Lviv University. On June 22, 1910 17 people from them (O. Barvynskyi, V. Bilozor, Yu. Bozheyko, M. Vavryk, S. Hasiuk, M. Kozak, O. Kordasevych, T. Krokhmalnyi, E. Oleksiy, I. Posmytyukh, I. Ryhlo, M. Sapelyak, D. Sprys, K. Stupnytskyi, L. Shust, V. Shchurovskyi) created their own institution "*Medychna Hromada*" at the founding meeting in the premises of the student society "*Academichna hromada*" [13].

Ivan Horbachevsky, a world-class Ukrainian scientist (chemist, biochemist, hygienist, epidemiologist, terminographer), candidate for the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine in 1911, a socio-political leader (during his studies at the University of Vienna, head of the student society "*Sich*" (1875–1877) which was patronized by "*Medychna Hromada*"; together with the outstanding scientist Ivan Puliyu, he organized the "*Ukrayinska Hromada*" society in Prague, created a fund to help students; since 1910, he was the honorary president of *ULT*, an educational figure (during 1883–1917 – a Professor of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry at Charles University in Prague; 1902–1903 (or 1903–1904 [14]) – the rector of Charles University; Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in 1889–1890, 1894–1895, 1904–1905, 1911–1912; since 1919 – a professor at the Ukrainian Free University in Vienna, Prague (since 1921); since 1924 – the rector of the Ukrainian Free University), statesman (in 1906–1917, a member of the Supreme State Sanitary Council in the Czech Kingdom, from 1908 – an adviser to the imperial court, in 1917–1918 – the Minister of Health of Austria-Hungary) [1; 14], willingly "accepted the protectorate over the society", always materially and morally supported it [13]. According to the charter, which was approved on May 31, 1910, in addition to providing moral and material assistance to medical students, creating and maintaining a medical library, running a cheap kitchen for students, student sanatoriums-prophylactics, etc., the emphasis was placed on the public educational work of the members of the "*Medychna hromada*": giving lectures, organizing concerts, etc. The aim of the association was to train and educate as many true social doctors, citizen doctors, with high principles of med-

ical ethics and the desire to selflessly work for the native people [13]. For this purpose, separate commissions were organized, among them the lecturer's commission, which initiated a wide educational activity of students [13]. Ahead of the time, long before the beginning of the Great War, in 1912, the "*Medychna hromada*" independently arranged "Samaritan courses", which were common in Europe, medical students arranged a series of lectures devoted to first medical aid, special attention was paid to medical aid to the wounded; in addition to theoretical information, they also organized practical exercises: forming practical skills of the trainees in applying bandages, artificial respiration, etc. These courses lasted several weeks, had a large number of participants (about 80, mostly women), were popular and had recognition from the public [1; 14]. It is expedient to use this experience in Ukraine today, when active military actions are being conducted on its territory, caused by the invasion of Russia on February 24, 2022.

There are two trends which are peculiar for the development of the Ukrainian student movement at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries: students who studied at Lviv Polytechnic and Lviv University left Polish societies and created their own, such as, for example, "*Osnova*" (at the Polytechnic) and "*Medychna hromada*" at Lviv University, which had "educational and scientific" and "professional credit" direction [6; 15; 16]; nationwide student structures are created to coordinate work. In the pre-war period, these functions were performed by the societies "*Vatra*" and "*Academichna hromada*", from September 1909 by the *Ukrayinskyi students'kyi soyuz (Ukrstudsoyuz)*, which aimed to become a center of "scientific and social life" for "moral and material assistance", as by the middle of 1913, it consisted of 38 sections and 500 people [15; 16].

During the interwar period, the student volunteer movement was revived in the field of social and medical protection of children and adults, education, cultural development, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, and dissemination of sanitary and hygienic knowledge. *Ukrayinske Likarske Tovarystvo (ULT)*, *Ukrayinske Hygienichne Tovarystvo (UHT)*, "*Medychna hromada*", Union of Ukrainian Women, "*Prosvita*", "*Vidrodzhennia*", "*Ridna Shkola*" and others lead this important direction of the national movement of Ukrainians. The increase of this authority was facilitated by the first Ukrainian medical congress in Galicia held in Lviv in November 1924. In addition to important scientific and medical problems, it actively discussed the public vocation of a medical worker and involving him in extensive educational work in the areas of hygiene and disease prevention [9].

Despite all the difficulties, Ukrainian studentship remained the most organized social state of Ukrainians in Galicia, primarily thanks to its local professional associations. Thus, in the second half of the 1930s, 33 Ukrainian academic societies operated, 22 of them were in Lviv. Active volunteer activities were carried out by such societies as "*Osnova*" (numbered 212-130 people), "*Medychna hromada*" (99 people), "*Vatra*" (70-18 people), the "*Obnova*" society of the Catholic orientation, created in 1934 (71

persons) etc. [17; 18], as well as many student organizations that operated under the patronage of “*Prosvita*”, “*Ridna Shkola*”, other mass societies as their “sections”, “clubs”, although in fact they remained independent associations.

Ukrainian students actively worked in the field of social welfare of pupils and preschoolers. Such public associations as “*Ukrayinska zahoronka*”, *UKTODOM*, “*Ridna shkola*”, *Tovarystvo vacaciynych osel*, etc. thanks to patrons, the help of the public, the clergy, nuns, especially Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, a network of institutions for the rehabilitation of children was created [19].

Members of *ULT*, *UHT*, “*Medychna hromada*” on a volunteer basis conducted examinations of the state of health of students who attended educational institutions of “*Ridna Shkola*”. For example, in 1926, according to the results of surveys of the state of health and social and living conditions of students of Lviv educational institutions, it was found that 34% of children were not eating enough, 20% had enlarged glands, and 25% had bad teeth; 12% of them had vision problems and the same number had skin diseases. Every tenth person was found to have an unsatisfactory lung condition, and 5 and 4% of people suffered from anemia and other ailments, respectively [20]. Depending on the opportunities and needs, preschoolers, as well as students of public schools, teacher’s seminars, gymnasiums, and specialized institutions of the “*Ridna Shkola*” received targeted assistance to improve the social and domestic conditions of life and health (free lunches, additional food, provision of warm clothes of children from poor families and orphans, etc. Since 1927, they have introduced a system of general mandatory medical examination, which made it possible to detect diseases, primarily tuberculosis, in the early stages and take preventive measures to prevent them. During school and after-school hours, children mastered the basics of sanitary and hygienic knowledge and a healthy lifestyle. For this purpose, special circles and sections were created [20].

It is important to note that the Ukrainians of Halychyna were aware of the important charity work in the field of education, culture, social, and medical protection carried out by the student body, so they actively supported it materially. The pages of periodicals of that time are full of calls for help to “academics” and testify to the consequences of such actions. Urban and rural branches of “*Prosvita*”, “*Ridna shkola*”, “*Sokola*”, “*Plast*”, “*Luga*”, “*Soyuz Ukrayinok*”, “*Silskyi gospodar*”, and other Ukrainian public associations systematically organized collections of donations for the benefit of students on various occasions, which on average brought from 5 to 80 zlotys, and in some places much larger sums.

We outline the volunteer activity of students who belonged to “*Medychna hromada*” (1910-1944) as a national phenomenon of the organization of public medical care of the population of Galicia, which has no analogue in the history of Ukrainian medicine. It is primarily about a high degree of civic self-awareness, patriotism, and self-sacrifice for the sake of serving the Ukrainian people. This generation of the Ukrainian medical elite during the

interwar period of the 20th century showed Europe an example of great courage and self-devotion, volunteerism, benevolence, affirmed the high ideals of humanism and Christian morality. This work of Ukrainian young men and women was duly evaluated and recognized by their Polish colleagues who were advanced doctors and public figures.

The experience of volunteer activities of the members of the “*Medychna hromada*” society is of great importance for today, as there are numerous examples of selfless work in the field of health care and medical provision of the Ukrainians of the region, medical assistance to soldiers in the ranks of the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen and the Ukrainian Galician Army, the organization of anti-alcohol and anti-nicotine activities, propaganda among the rural population of the basics of sanitary and hygienic knowledge, mass medical education, selfless (free) work in the “*Narodna Lichnytsia*”, provision of medical services to low-income sections of the population, widows, orphans, disabled people, veterans of the Great War, medical care of children and youth etc. Nowadays they inspire medics who provide assistance to soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, wounded in hospitals, internally displaced persons, etc.

The experience of organizing mass medical education among the population by Ukrainian students during the studied period is instructive for the professional training of future medical workers. Thus, from the beginning of its existence, “*Medychna hromada*” systematically carried out medical education of Ukrainians. The essay “Tasks of a Ukrainian medical student in social work” delivered by the student Sakhno on December 20, 1927 at the 3rd General Meeting, which clearly outlined the content and directions of public advisory and educational work [13], is emblematic for current students. The results of the study of the source base prove that only during 1927-1928, thanks to the volunteer activity of students who belonged to the cultural and educational commission, 40 popular lectures of “anti-tuberculosis content” were organized; during 1928-1929, “medical students Migotskyi, Kozhynskyi, Klyufas, Voronka read 120 abstracts on medical topics” [5; 13; 17].

## CONCLUSIONS

So, Ukrainian public student associations really contributed to the improvement of medical and sanitary-hygienic services for children, youth and adults of Galicia, launched a large-scale struggle for a healthy lifestyle, established mass medical education in the field of providing first aid, combating ailments, and preventing infectious diseases, medical examinations of the population, treatment and rehabilitation of people, mother and child health care. In all these areas, they worked selflessly and free of charge in the field of protecting people’s health (“*Narodna Lichnytsia*” in Lviv), acted as volunteers, benefactors (served vulnerable sections of the population, children, mothers, disabled people, widows, orphans, veterans, etc.), relied on their own strength. The lack of state subsidies, limited own resources (medical equipment, professional



personnel, etc.) prevented the establishment of Ukrainian “*narodna lichnytsias*” by the cities of Galicia. Thanks to the volunteer work of Ukrainian students, primarily doctors, tens of thousands of Ukrainians were involved in large-scale educational work led by *UHT*, *ULT*, “*Medychna hromada*”, “*Vidrodzhennia*” and others. It became an important factor in the formation of mass knowledge on the basics of hygiene and sanitation, preventing the occurrence and spread of various diseases, primarily tuberculosis. Voluntary educational activities of Ukrainian students in the field of the mass movement of Ukrainians for a healthy lifestyle, anti-alcohol and anti-nicotine propaganda had great success (even in the general European context). The volunteer work of Ukrainian students has become a kind of social educational and medical phenomenon, the uniqueness of which can be seen primarily in the fact that the “*Medychna hromada*” gathered Ukrainian students – “ascetics”, the young generation of the future Ukrainian medical elite, who demonstrated to Europe an example of great courage and self-devotion, benevolence, affirmed the high ideals of humanism and Christian morality. This institution became a source for the training of specialists for volunteer work in the field of public medical care of the Ukrainians of the region, this experience must be actively used today in the complex realities of wartime, the provision of first medical aid under war conditions, the spread of pandemics and other infectious diseases, and the rehabilitation of those who suffered as a result Russian invasion, mass knowledge of the basics of hygiene and sanitation, etc. The training of a national doctor should become a priority task of medical education institutions.

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