



**Department of Medicine and Research Laboratory of Internal Medicine**

**National Expertise Center of Greece in Autoimmune Liver Diseases**

**University Hospital of Larissa**



## **Mission, Vision and Values**

### **Mission**

The Department of Medicine and specifically the Liver Outpatient clinic in the University General Hospital of Larissa and the Research Laboratory of Internal Medicine (Faculty of Medicine, School of Health Sciences, University of Thessaly) are characterized by their in depth involvement with liver diseases, including viral hepatitis, alcoholic hepatopathy, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (steatosis/steatohepatitis), autoimmune liver diseases (Autoimmune Hepatitis, Primary Biliary Cholangitis, Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis) and less commonly encountered diseases, like inherited disorders (i.e. Wilson's disease).

Autoimmune liver diseases have been registered in the category of rare diseases based on their frequency in the general population (< 1:2,000). But if you translate these numbers into a large population, like that of the 25 members of the European Union, approximately 230,000 patients correspond for each disease with this frequency. In addition, if 5,000-8,000 rare diseases have been recognized so far and 6-8% of the population suffers from a rare disease, then the total number of patients with rare diseases in the EU amounts to 24-36 million. These figures clearly illustrate the need for the existence of Specialized Centres, that provide a significant range of services related to healthcare services and participate in research projects in collaboration with similar centers at national and international level.

The international recognition of the Department of Medicine and the Liver Outpatient clinic (University Hospital of Larissa) and the Research Laboratory of Internal Medicine of the University of Thessaly is imprinted on the following markers (quality indicators): The important research

activity, as shown by publications in high-quality journals, funding by competing and non-competitive programs, cooperation with relevant national and international centres and the proven ability to handle such patients.

In Greece, the Department of Medicine has already been recognized as "Centre for rare diseases (with an emphasis on autoimmune hepatitis)" by the Scientific and Administrative Board of the University General Hospital of Larissa, by the General Assembly of the Faculty of Medicine (School of Health Sciences, University of Thessaly) and the Greek Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (KEELNPO).

Finally, the University Hospital of Larissa through its Department of Medicine has been recognised by the Greek Ministry of Health as "National Expertise Center of Greece in Autoimmune Liver Diseases" (GG 4040/B/05.11.2019).

**Mission** of the Expertise Centre for rare and complex diseases and particular for autoimmune liver diseases (with an emphasis on Autoimmune Hepatitis and Primary Biliary Cholangitis) is to focus on early diagnosis that has a clear benefit for the patient and healthcare system and the provision of high quality healthcare services based on a specialized multidisciplinary team. In parallel, high-level research (clinical and laboratory) in collaboration with other national and international centres will aid towards more accurate patients' management, leading to improvement of their prognosis and quality of life.

In detail, the Mission of the National Expertise Centre is:

- To provide multidisciplinary patient management with the respective diseases, that relates to their early diagnosis, follow up and treatment.
- To record the diagnostic approach and management of these patients in order to use the respective information for the study of their outcome
- To provide specialized services according to current guidelines and to record the quality of these services (outcome measures and quality control)

- To deliver expert opinion for patients referred from local healthcare services or from the broader region of Greece
- To actively contribute to the continuous education and scientific training of physicians (specialists and trainees), as well as nursing and paramedical staff
- To contribute to expansion of the educational program at the undergraduate level with systematic learning of new laboratory techniques and discussion of clinical cases, related to the respective diseases
- To promote collaboration with other specialties, relative to its objective
- To contribute essentially to further education of physicians specializing in Clinical Hepatology, that the Department of Medicine is offering
- To organize lectures, workshops and congresses for education on issues related to rare diseases, including Autoimmune Hepatitis and Primary Biliary Cholangitis
- To design and carry out clinical/laboratory studies in collaboration with other national and international centres that relate to the pathogenesis, new prognostic factors and novel treatments for these diseases
- To have direct collaboration with patients' groups/organizations at local and international level wherever they exist
- To actively collaborate with other centres (national and international) within the framework of Expertise centres' network

## **Vision**

The vision of the Expertise Centre is to become the leading Centre in Greece that will provide high-level healthcare services for autoimmune liver diseases (with an emphasis in Autoimmune Hepatitis and Primary Biliary Cholangitis) by a multidisciplinary team and to lead the way on conducting research either within the Centre's premises or in collaboration with national or international Expertise Centres.

## **Values**

- Integrity – Responsibility and correct approach to the Centre’s mission
- Reliability – guarantee security and neutrality during performance of the Centre’s activities
- Team empowerment- providing opportunities through education for improving the skills of the team’s members
- Dedication to excellence
- Innovation
- Reliability-Reliable specialization