

Professor Constantin Etco – to the 80th anniversary

22.07.1941–19.12.2017

Professor Constantin Etco was a person of high moral standing and civic responsibility, a true professional who contributed to the development of national medicine and higher medical and pharmaceutical education and proved himself a talented educator and skilled manager. He devoted himself to medicine and became over the years a scientist of international stature in the field of public health, economics, management and psychopedagogy in medicine. He developed and implemented for the first time, at *Nicolae Testemitanu* State University of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Republic of Moldova (*Nicolae Testemitanu* SUMPh), the concept of reorganizing the medical staff training system through residency and master's degree studies, contributing substantially to the health system reform.

Constantin Etco was born on July 22, 1941 in Horodiste village, Calarași district, where he completed secondary education. After school he worked for two years, then entered and graduated from Tiraspol Medical School and performed his military service. Between 1965-1971, he continued his studies at Chisinau State Institute of Medicine, Faculty of General Medicine.

Upon graduation with honors from the Institute, given his qualities of a leader and organizer, he was invited as an assistant to the Department of Social Hygiene and Healthcare Organization. Constantin Etco had the great chance to work (being also the first PhD student) under the leadership of Professor Nicolae Testemitanu during 15 years. He passed through all the stages of professional training: assistant, senior lecturer, associate professor, university professor and head of department.

Under the guidance of Professor Nicolae Testemitanu, he defended his PhD thesis – *Medical-social aspects of infant mortality from pneumonia of children in rural areas* (1979) at the Central Institute for Advanced Training of Physicians in Moscow and the thesis of doctor habilitat in medical sciences – *Conditions, ways of life of children from densely populated rural areas* (1992). The results of his research works have been widely applied in the development of prophylactic measures aimed at improving children's health.

Parallel with the scientific-didactic activity, as the dean of postgraduate studies (1993-1995), later the dean of master, doctoral and postdoctoral studies (1995-2000), professor Etco participated in the elaboration of normative acts (government resolutions, regulations) for legislating the reform of postgraduate training of University graduates through residency and master's degree training – a new form of postgraduate specialization, introduced for the first time at *Nicolae Testemitanu* SUMPh, later implementing master's degree courses, young lecturers' training in fundamental disciplines as well as doctoral programs.

Also, due to his innovative spirit, in 1997, he founded the Department of Economics, Management and Psychopedagogy at *Nicolae Testemitanu* SUMPh – a division in charge of preparing doctors for work in new economic and social conditions. As the head of the department, Constantin Etco decided to review curricula and introduced new disciplines, such as: healthcare economics, management, psychology, legal bases, medical inactivity – for students and psychopedagogy – for master/PhD students and competitors. Based on the modules developed by the mentioned department, where by 2005, there were 6 study disciplines and 8 courses, the foundation has been laid for establishing the Public Health Management School.

Constantin Etco is one of the first national promoters of eco-



omic theory development, which represents the landmark of a new research direction in the medical area and human resources management. He consolidated this branch by creating the *The Economy, Management and Psychology Association in Medicine* (in 2000) and by founding in 2003 a scientific journal *Public Health, Economics and Management in Medicine*, while the treatise *Management in the System of Health* (2006, 864 p.) remains the most important book for doctors, heads of medical institutions and PHMS master students.

Between 1986-2013, Professor Etco was the member of the Scientific Council and the Senate of *Nicolae Testemitanu* SUMPh, since 1994 – member of the Association of University Professors for Training of Healthcare Administrators of the USA, since 1998 – vice president of the League of Physicians of the Republic of Moldova.

During 2000-2017 he served as the head of the Department of Medicine and Pharmacy of the National Council of Accreditation and Attestation, promoting 1600 files of scientists to degrees and scientific titles of doctor and doctor habilitat at 36 specialties in medicine. Under the guidance of professor Etco, 36 doctoral and 4 PhD theses in medical sciences were defended, the outcomes of scientific research resulting in 760 published papers, including 35 monographs, 80 textbooks, compendiums, guides, course materials, etc. Moreover, we can even mention *Professor Constantin Etco's school*.

As the main specialist in public health and management of the Ministry of Health, he contributed to the elaboration of normative acts on the health system reform: National Health Policy of the Republic of Moldova for 2007-2021, Strategy for the development of the health system in 2008-2017 etc. Professor Etco is one of the leading authors of the laws and regulations required for the implementation of the compulsory health insurance system. The results of his research are used to develop health policies and strategies, national programs and government resolutions, representing the bedrock for the decisions of the Ministry of Health in carrying out national health system reforms. In 2017, Constantin Etco, disciple and promoter of professor Testemitanu's ideas, published and launched the homage volume – *Nicolae Testemitanu – a name that became a symbol*.

He really knew how to honor his obligations and show respect to those around him, regardless of whether they were students and master/doctoral students or scientists and colleagues. Endowed with humanity, parental patience and receptivity, he had always been able to support them through his temperate speech and exemplary behavior.

His prodigious activity was appreciated with high state distinctions and honorary titles: State Medal *Nicolae Testemitanu* (2011), Medal *Dimitrie Cantemir* (2011), Order *Glory of Labor* (2012), Laureate of *Scientist of the Year*, Award of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova (2008, 2011), Health Award *Entire Medical Career* (2016), Laureate of the *National Award* (2016), etc.

The memory of Professor Constantin Etco will be perpetuated by installing his bust on the *Alley of Brilliant Scientists and Doctors of Nicolae Testemitanu* SUMPh. The life and activity of professor Etco will remain an exceptional model of service, an example worth following for the younger generations.

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