



**Cerebral Palsy:
CESO Ushers in New Way of Thinking across Ukraine**

Canadians Help Children's Rehab in Lviv

The Dzherelo Children's Rehabilitation Centre in Lviv is a small treatment and educational facility with space for 52 children with cerebral palsy, but from its cramped borrowed quarters in a local nursery school, it is sending shock waves across the country. The only one of its kind in Ukraine, the Centre is ushering in a new attitude towards the neurological disease. It is dispelling the long-held myth that those who suffer from it are unfit to join in society.

Until Dzherelo, it was accepted that victims of cerebral palsy not be allowed to attend school and instead be forced to live isolated lives. Then in 1993, the Nadiya Association of concerned parents started the Centre to give their children a better life. With the help of two Canadian-Ukrainians, CESO International Services and the Children of Chernobyl Canadian Fund, the facility has indeed changed the world for the 52 children and their parents. But there are 1,600 more children in the region alone who also need its physical, educational and social programs.

Janet Farrell, a highly respected health care consultant from Burlington, Ontario, is a CESO Volunteer Adviser who has been helping the Dzherelo Children's

Health nor the Board of Education have a policy for funding the work of physiotherapists at a Centre such as Dzherelo because there is no other Centre like it and it doesn't fall within anyone's mandate," she says. As a result, the Centre's physiotherapists must depend on privately raised money to pay their wages. "Still, I think this Centre is well positioned to influence policy in the country."

This thinking is shared by the Centre's informal Board of Directors, a group of four dedicated and determined professionals. Two of those on the team are Canadians of Ukrainian descent who recently moved to Lviv in the belief that they could make a difference. Oksana Kunanec is one of the Canadian-Ukrainians who already has had an impact on the Centre, and beyond. A rehabilitation physiotherapist and liaison for the Children of Chernobyl Canadian

rehabilitation centre accessible to disabled children from all parts of Ukraine. Mrs. Farrell is working with this team on her second of what will be a series of CESO assignments to help them reach their goal.

In 1994, the City of Lviv offered the Nadiya Association a partially constructed school to serve as the Centre's new home, provided it could raise the approximate \$1,450,000 needed to finish it. The Centre is meeting the challenge. Thanks in large part to the Children of Chernobyl Canadian Fund and private fundraising efforts, the Centre hopes to move into the new building next year. Mrs. Farrell adds that it will be the first building in the region, if not in the country, to be completely wheelchair accessible. She notes that in their current space, children have to be carried into the school as well as into upstairs classrooms, since there are no ramps or elevators.

Still, the Centre may well be one of the few schools where children get depressed at the mention of it closing for the holidays, says Mrs. Farrell. The remarkable progress of those children is driving the Centre's expansion plans.

Once relocated, the Centre's aim is to increase the number of classes and rehabilitation services for children, develop qualified staff who could train therapists and teachers from other parts of Ukraine in the care of disabled children, and educate parents to help them understand and assist the development of their children.

CESO will continue to assist the Centre in acquiring operational expertise. CESO is a not-for-profit independent organization, supported by the Canadian government, corporations and individuals, which sends volunteers with senior business and technical expertise on short-term assignments to share their skills with enterprises in more than 40 nations, including Ukraine and countries in the region.

"I really believe we're going to reach our goals," says Mrs. Farrell, who takes time out from her busy consultancy practice for four to five weeks at a time to help out in Lviv. "What has been accomplished in three years is nothing less than amazing. There's no stopping now."

Donations for the Centre can be made to:
Nadiya Association Building Fund
c/o Children of Chernobyl Canadian Fund
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Some of the cerebral palsy victims with CESO volunteer Janet Farrell.



Fund: "Rehab Project", she divides her time between working with the Centre's children and building a network of support services for children across the country. She travels to such places as Brody, Chortkiv and Ternopil to consult with doctors and therapists on modes of treatment and introduce them to the latest research and methods for helping severely disabled children. Ms. Kunanec has also been instrumental in setting up the first physiotherapy program in Ukraine at the University of Lviv in collaboration with Queen's, McMaster and Manitoba Universities and the support of the Partners in Health Program.

Zenia Kushpeta was a concert pianist who taught at the University of Toronto and Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., before moving to Ukraine. Now, her great accomplishments include fundraising, public relations and liaising with the Canadian Children of Chernobyl Fund, whose support is vital to the Centre.

The other members of the steering team are Program Director Myroslav Nykolayev and Head of Nadiya Association Mykola Swarnyk, both of whom have children with cerebral palsy, and an unwavering commitment to create a regional

Rehabilitation Centre design and implement strategies to meet its urgent need for expansion. Mrs. Farrell has been Vice-President of two chronic and acute care hospitals in Ontario, and her many years of experience allowed her to compile a step-by-step detailed administrative and funding action plan for the Centre. But she says the Centre's greatest challenge is the lack of government policy, and hence support, for what is the country's first rehabilitation and educational centre. While it has attracted much regional and national respect, Farrell says the Centre "simply falls through the cracks" when it comes to official assistance.

"For example, teachers at the Centre are paid regular teacher's salary, but neither the Board of