

Hello dear EOA- friends!

My name is Inna Murtazina. I'm from Ukraine.

I am very glad to see and hear you all today.

I represent ASTOM-UKRAINE All-Ukrainian Association, office in Lviv.

Also in Ukraine there is an Astom ILCO, office in Kyiv, and there is another organization in Odessa ILCO. These three are non-governmental organizations.

My colleagues Andriy Prus from Lviv, Valentina Sherbina from Kyiv and Oleksandra Nikitina from Odessa asked me to pass their greetings to all of you.

We are working together on issues of state supply of stoma products for ostomates in Ukraine.

Over the many years (almost 16 years) we have been working together, we have made some progress.

What used to be only on paper has begun to be partly implemented in life.

For the last couple of years, ostomates have had the opportunity to receive state support.

But (!) not all ostomates and not constantly.

Many problems still remain.

Unfortunately the health care system in Ukraine is still not perfect.

Immediately after surgery, the patient cannot receive public assistance in the form of a stoma appliances. He has to wait until next year, when his needs will be taken into account in the next year's national budget.

Patients after surgery have recover psychologically, medically, socially. They themselves have to find answers to questions of how to continue to live with stoma, where and how to get stoma appliances.

There is no one from the specialist medical care who will come to the ward and tell the patient how to live, what he can do, where to get the stoma equipment. Stoma patients have to find out everything themselves.

We still do not have stoma offices (rooms) where ostomates can get advice from stoma therapist and stoma nurse.

Success can be achieved by active persons - those who go, write, ask for their rights and demand according to the law.

Otherwise no one will bring anything home.

Those living in cities are more likely to receive government support than people living in rural areas.

We have repeatedly raised this issue.

The answer remains the same - there is not enough funding .

There is also a lack of money for patients to receive stoma appliances every month.

At the beginning of the year they can get something, and at the end of the year they are told that the money is over.

The financial income of most patients is low, and stoma appliances in our country are imported, their price is high. And that's why ostomates can't buy them at the pharmacy.

So, the only hope is for non-governmental organizations that receive assistance from abroad and give advice on how to live with stoma. Volunteers of these organizations are also ostomates and they share their own experiences. Newcomer ostomates are helped by ostomates with more experience.

ASTOM-UKRAINE printed the brochures "Life with stoma" in which it's very important base information that give the question for the most frequent questions of patients.

And now you probably all realise that there is a war going on in our country, chaos and now there is no state support at all.

ASTOM-UKRAINE have lost the shipment from Deutsche ILCO in the beginning of the war. Astom ILCO (Kyiv) has not yet been able to receive a shipment from WOF (Canada).

Oleksandra Nikitina from Odessa asked me to pass their thanks to Henning Granslev and COPA for their help. They received the shipment at the day before the war.

ASTOM-UKRAINE says huge thanks to Deutsche ILCO Maria Hass for their help and also to Milan's ostomy association - Giuseppe de Salvo. He and other volunteers organized the shipment using contacts with Consulate of Ukraine in Italy in Milano. Consulate helped to send the shipment by car in Ukraine. We were informed that Deutsche ILCO already prepared the shipment for ASTOM-UKRAINE. We very do hope that it'll be successful delivered to the warehouse in Ukraine.

I would like to note that we have received many letters of support and offers of assistance from organizations of stoma patients and also individual messages from ostomates all over the world.

Also, the manufacturer of the stoma products, Hollister, has offered to help us and we are now hopeful that the shipment will arrive safely at the warehouse.

Ostomates of Ukraine would like to express their sincere gratitude for all the help and support they have given.

Dear friends, God bless you all!