**Society of Military Medicine of the Czech Medical Association of J. E. Purkyně**

**– a brief history**

The society was founded under the original name of the **Society of Military Physicians and Pharmacists** on **April 7, 1999** on the initiative of Col. Assoc. Prof. MUDr. Svatopluk Býma, CSc., the then Rector of the Military Medical Academy (MMA) of J. E. Purkyně in Hradec Králové (now the Faculty of Military Health Sciences of the University of Defence), Col. MUDr. Roman Blanař, Deputy Chief of the Military Health Department of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic in Prague and Col. ret. Prof. MUDr. Josef Fusek, DrSc., Head of the Department of Toxicology MMA and Rector Emeritus of MMA. After recruiting members, the society's board was elected in December 1999 and the first chairman became **Col. MUDr. Jan Vesecký**, Chief of the Military Health Department of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic.

The main impetus to the establishment of the Society at that time was the continuing reduction of the Medical Service of the Army of the Czech Republic and at the same time new demands in the lifelong education of military doctors, so as to create a professional platform for transferring professional experience and knowledge regardless of specialization or classification and reflecting the specifics of military healthcare.

The Society set itself the main goals of increasing expertise in the field of medical sciences and related fields, spreading medical education among soldiers and citizens in the context of the main tasks of the military medical service.

The Society has gradually grown to more than 200 members and its most visible activities so far include organizing annual conferences.

From the second term in 2003, **BG Assoc. Prof. MUDr. Leo Klein, CSc**., Chief of the Military Medical Service of the Czech Armed Forces, became chairman of the Society for a number of years. The name of the company was extended to the **Society of Military Physicians, Pharmacists and Veterinarians** in order to maximize its professional scope. **Military Medical Science Letters** ([www.mmsl.cz](http://www.mmsl.cz)), issued by Faculty of Military Health Sciences of the University of Defense, have become a professional publishing platform. Information on activities is also published in the Military Health Newsletter. The Society has established a partnership with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrmedizin und Wehrpharmazie.

The third chairman of the Society was elected in 2017 **Col(GS) Prof. MUDr. Jan Horáček, Ph.D**., Head of the Department of Military Internal Medicine and Military Hygiene of the Faculty of Military Health Sciences of the University of Defense and senior consultant of the Czech Military Medical Service for internal medicine. Under his chairmanship, the Society organized three successful annual conferences with international participation, the next in line being postponed due to anti-epidemic measures in connection with Covid-19 pandemic. In 2018, the Section of Young Military Physicians, which had the first lecture day in the last year of the conference, started to operate within the Society.

The last elections took place in 2021 and resulted in the current board with the chairman, **Col(GS) MUDr. Miloš Bohoněk, Ph.D**., Head of the Department of Hematology and Blood Transfusion of the Military University Hospital Prague and senior consultant for hematology and transfusion medicine of the Czech Military Medical Service. In order to simplify the name, the Society was in 2021 renamed to the **Society of Military Medicine (SMM)** and the **Section of Young Military Physicians** and the **Section of Non-physician Medical Workers** were institutionally established, thus opening the Society to all heathcare professionals.

The new board adopted the Program Statement and arranged the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Faculty of Military Health Sciences of the University of Defense and the Section of Military Medical Service of the Ministry of Defense, thus profiling and setting the direction of further operation and development of the Society.