

Dear Mr Soverns,

We are very grateful to you for the financial support which has allowed us to resume the operation of the vehicle, presented to Central Regional Clinical Hospital Rehabilitation Center in Beslan.

For a long time it was impossible for us to use the minibus and conduct therapeutic outings though the clients needed and wanted them very much. Thanks to you, we were able to restart the project which helps to restore physical and mental condition as well as family interrelations of the hostage crisis victims. The therapeutic outings are aimed at rehabilitation and recovery through reconnection with nature. During the trips the families are accompanied and supervised by a team of qualified psychologists. Usually we visit "Algus", horse-riding center. It is located in one of the park-zones near Vladikavkaz-city. The children with their parents come to "Algus" and have great fun. They enjoy being taught riding skills, feeding deer, donkeys, rabbits and doves. The families feel happy and return home full of energy and love, overwhelmed with new impressions and positive emotions.

From January till November, 2009 we made 9 visits to "Algus". More than 40 Beslan families (72 persons) enjoyed the benefits of hippo-therapy and the pleasure of communication with living creatures and so to say "the nature itself". Some families were lucky to visit "Algus" several times. After the outings the families feel healthy and relaxed. They feel inspired and much more energetic to solve the issues they are concerned about. On the whole the therapeutic outings considerably facilitate the recovery process. Here are some typical feedback examples.

"It was a super trip! I greatly enjoyed both the trip itself and the communication with the specialists from the Center. We really need it. Great thanks to all those who put forward the idea and carried it out!"

"After the sessions with the psychologists and visits to "Algus" my children and I feel inspired. The outings improve the quality of our lives!. Thank you so much for your hard and honest work. Good luck and best wishes! The Bigoevs family.

"We are very grateful for your help! It's wonderful to have an opportunity to spend the time in the open air, to enjoy the beauty of nature! Even the mountain air itself has its therapeutic effect! Our children are very happy! The Kozlovs family.

"Thank you very much, young ladies (the psychologists)! The outings helped me to find common ground with my children again. I really enjoyed travelling with my whole family. The outings help us to unite our efforts in fighting the misfortunes of life. With great respect, the Romanovs family

Thanks to your assistance we also managed to launch the rehab program for medical personnel "We go to work with pleasure" which deals with the problem of

professional burnout. The destination of therapeutic outings was the Pass of Tsey, the most picturesque place in the Northern Caucasus. The bright autumn colors of the mountain landscapes, the beauty of nature and the work of psychologists helped the medical staff to relax and forget their everyday problems and misfortunes.

On the whole, we planned and carried out 10 therapeutic outings to the tourist center in Tsey. It is located high in the mountains (more than 6600 feet above the sea level). Unfortunately due to the difficult road and weather conditions we were able to reach the Center only in August and September.

In the course of preliminary conversation with the medical staff they complained of undue fatigue, irritability, sleeplessness, emotional instability. Each group consisted of 13 persons: 10 employees (physicians and nurses) from Beslan and Vladikavkaz hospitals who worked with the victims of the hostage crisis, members of their families, 2 psychologists and one volunteer (more than 100 clients were involved in the project). On the road to Tsey the volunteer Marat Beteev, the student of Geography and Tourism department, told us about the sights of Alagirsky and Tsejksy gorges. The itinerary included visiting Alansky Orthodox Nunnery and an excursion conducted by one of the nuns. The group members learned about the history of the place and visited the temple.

All the outings were a success. The people were very happy. They thanked everyone who was involved in the project and gave them an opportunity to restore their mental and physical condition.

Here are some words from the letters we received after the outings.

«... I love the peaceful atmosphere of holy places. I was amazed to learn that practically everything in that wonderful place was created, so to say, by hands of the nuns ...D. Hugaeva »

«... I really enjoyed the visit to Alansky nunnery, especially the holy well” M. Abaeva»

«...the visit to the nunnery gave me peace in my soul” T.Bitarova»

«... I liked the program very much. In our everyday life we don't have enough time for communication with our colleagues and even our families. Every day at work we are exposed to stress and strains. We feel exhausted, the hospital atmosphere deteriorates our minds and souls and there is practically no relief. Today's trip helped me to relax. I appreciate the work of the psychologists who managed to “find the keys to our hearts”. For us, physicians, it is quite necessary to have regular stress relief as we work with sick children, and it is not only about our patients' health condition, but also about their emotional troubles. Great thanks to all those involved in the project!!!»

“...it was a unique chance to lift the burden of responsibility for our patients and families, to stop thinking of the difficulties and problems of everyday life and work. It's a remarkable way to feel reconnection with the wild nature and experience the excitement of visiting the holy place”

“What can be better than change our daily mental activity for the physical one, to breathe the fresh mountain air to the full volume of our lungs!. That was really precious”;

We really appreciate your assistance and look forward towards further communication.

Yours faithfully,

The staff of Central Regional Clinical Hospital Rehabilitation Center , Beslan,
North Ossetia-Alania.