



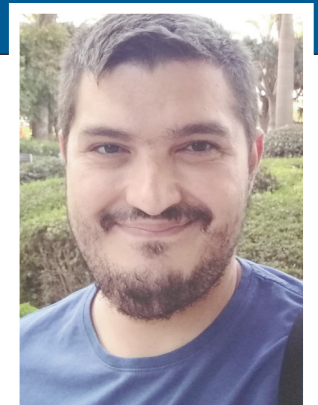
Boosting Research Careers

Dragan Gjorgjievski with North Macedonian colleagues

Dragan Gjorgjievski is a family physician & researcher in North Macedonia

How did you become involved with the IPCRG?

In 2017 I joined the Breathe Well study on smoking cessation. This brought me into contact with the IPCRG, its activities and network. I was able to attend and present at several IPCRG Conferences and learn from other researchers and countries in the network. Seeing the value of the international collaboration and the IPCRG network, we developed a new group which became the IPCRG country member in North Macedonia.



Dragan Gjorgjievski

How have the opportunities in IPCRG enabled you to grow in the field of research?

I was already interested in respiratory research, having undertaken small studies on pneumonia in our patient population. Thanks to the IPCRG and the Breathe Well project I was able to take part for the first time in a large study in the second year of my doctoral studies. This research was a part of my PhD thesis which I defended in June 2021.

My research skills were limited at the beginning of my work with Breathe Well. During the project I was able to learn about how to design and run a research project and was able to follow courses on qualitative analysis, statistics, and health economics. At the IPCRG conferences my learning accelerated, hearing about other respiratory research and having the opportunity to share experiences between colleagues. I also followed the IPCRG Teach the Teacher programme, which was supported by the Breathe Well project.

What do you think your key achievements have been?

Learning and mastering how to organise a scientific research project, alongside developing my research competencies, have been my main achievements in relation to my work with the IPCRG. I have gained confidence and experience which I can use when conducting scientific research projects in the future.

A major achievement for us in North Macedonia was producing one of the best studies in primary care through the Breathe Well project, on the Effectiveness of lung age or CO feedback combined with very brief advice and behavioural support for smoking cessation in North Macedonia.

What advice do you have for starting researchers?

My advice is not to get hung up on trying to understand everything at the outset. Expect the unexpected and be thoughtful of others, but maintain objectivity. Importantly, don't be afraid to participate in research projects, you will learn a lot from them.

What do you plan to do next?

I plan to continue research into respiratory disease and my work as a physician. I am currently the president of our association of family physicians, so I also need to build up my management skills.