

Maria Zabozlaeva



I, Maria Zabozlaeva. This photo was taken for the Board of Honor on the occasion of 25th anniversary of children's hospital #2 of Saratov in 1975 (department of postnatal pathology).

In 1942 when my sister Vera was one year old she and mother fell ill with typhoid. My mother had to go to hospital due to her severe condition and Vera was at home. She also had whooping cough and I had a release from school for few months to look after my sister. Probably I chose the doctor's profession after I nursed Vera back to health. Of course, my father and his brother were helping me since we had to do everything by ourselves. I washed clothes in a tub that I put on a stool. I disinfected all clothes and bed sheets, cooked and visited my mother in hospital. When Vera recovered I understood how much I wanted to become a doctor.

In 1947 I entered the Pediatric Faculty at the Medical College. I passed my entrance exams and got all excellent marks. My Jewish identity didn't play any role. I finished this college in 1953. Upon graduation from Medical College I worked as a doctor in a children's hospital, nursery school and was a district doctor.

My husband Yuri and I kept moving from one place to another where Yuri's military service required. In 1952 our daughter Sophia was born. From Balashov we moved to Cheliabinsk [about 1600 km from Moscow]. My husband finished his service in Feodorovka village Kustanai region [over 1700 km from Moscow] in Kazakhstan where our son was born in 1957. I named him Fyodor after father my husband.

We returned to Saratov in 1961. In 1961 I went to work in the department of postnatal pathology in children's infectious hospital #2. In 1962 - 1964 I finished a residency course and became a neonatologist. I worked there from 1961 till 1995. Our chief doctor was a Jew and so were many of my colleagues and I didn't face any negative attitudes at work. I had a happy life with my husband. We liked going to the cinema, theaters and concerts in the Philharmonic. We had a car and went to Mineralnyie Vody in the Caucasus on vacation. In 1968 we traveled to the Baltic Republics and Leningrad. In 1977 we made a tour of Western Ukraine and Moldova. We visited Kishinev, Yassy,

Morshansk and Lvov. We had few friends and celebrated Soviet and family holidays with them. We had parties and sang Soviet songs and Russian folk songs. We didn't sing any Jewish songs.

Like my mother, I tried to have no political subjects discussed in the family. Of course, we heard or read in newspapers about the 'spring in Prague', dissidents and departure of many Jews to Israel in early 1970s and that many Soviet citizens were deprived of their Soviet residency, but I didn't share my opinions about it. I believe that people always do what they think is right. My husband died in 1973. I've never considered moving to another country. I cannot imagine living without my family, friends or acquaintances. I had many Jewish colleagues and we always supported each other. We enjoyed working together and never had any problems due to our Jewish identity.