

General surgeons and endoscopy training

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Dear Editor,

In 2000, while I was the acting secretary, the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) sent a letter to the Turkish Surgical Association (TCD). Our gastroenterologist colleagues had asked the TTB to issue a statement to institutions such as private insurance, or banks for non-payment of endoscopic examinations. The late president at that time, Dr. Fusun Sayek and general secretary Dr. Eriş Bilaloğlu had invited representatives of relevant professional associations. At that time, I was assigned this task as secretary-general of TCD and I explained the endoscopic training I got and presented my practice with documents, and stated that many of my colleagues perform this procedure at least as good as me. As a result, TTB concluded that gastroenterologists and gastrointestinal system general surgeons were authorized to perform endoscopic examination and interventions in the Republic of Turkey, and that the private or public payment institutions needed to recognize this. It all started after that decision. For the last fifteen years we have been in various courts. Then the Ministry of Health became involved. Boards, commissions, committees, the struggle did not end. What is the matter? Surgeons should not perform endoscopy! Why not? For the obvious reasons.

The reason I wrote this letter is a respected senior surgeon, Prof. Dr. Şükrü Özer. He did not enter into these discussions in humility, but he sent a document that should be shared with our younger colleagues, to depict how Turkish medicine changed in time.

In the document, Prof. Dr. Zafer Paykoç, who is one of the universal monuments of Turkish medicine and founders of gastroenterology in our country, documents the endoscopic training period of general surgeon Sukru Ozer and certifies him to perform endoscopic procedures (Figure 1). If the Turkish medicine is at a certain level today, it is based on self-sacrificing efforts of our senior colleagues. In particular, the statements of our elegant professor that are exemplary to the relations between physicians should be read and discussed by all our colleagues and administrators. Most of us believe that execution of our profession is getting worse day by day, but I wanted to think on if it has always been this way, or if there is anything we can do about it?

Best regards,

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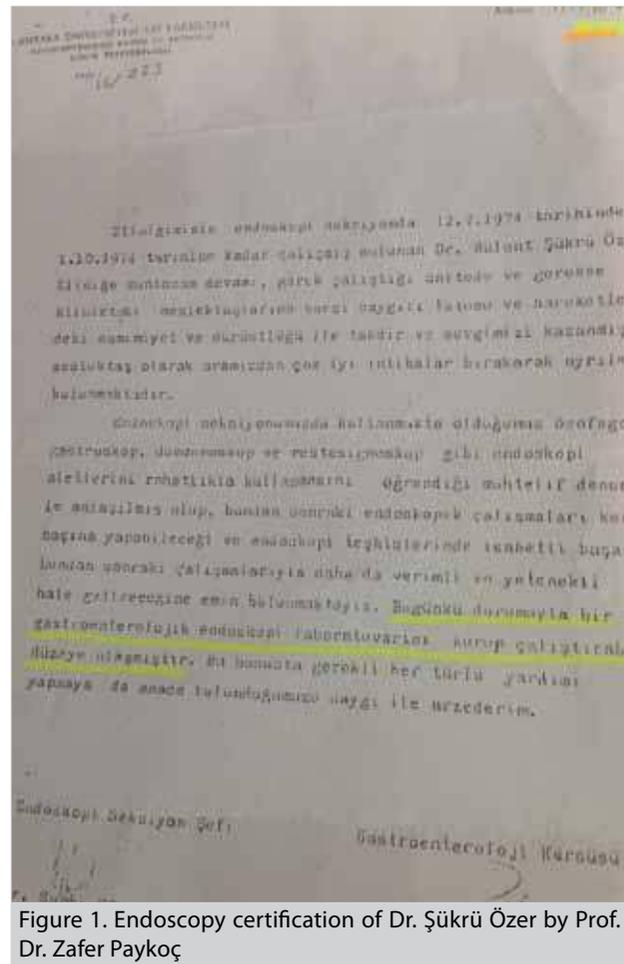


Figure 1. Endoscopy certification of Dr. Şükrü Özer by Prof. Dr. Zafer Paykoç