

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

Dimitrios Sotiriou

Associate Professor of Medical Physics
School of Medicine, University of Athens

MODERN ASCLEPEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **We are all human beings and citizens who are concerned daily about:**
 - **Our Health**
 - **Our Culture**
 - **The Environment**

- **but we all question...whether the systems in place to promote them and to support us, will meet our life-time needs and our current and future expectations ?**

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

◆ 3 facts of life:

- **1st: Every day, the great majority of people are healthy...**[and are working to obtain a fulfilling life-style and a secure future for themselves and their children]
- **2nd: «Health is the complete physical, mental and social well-being and not the absence of illness» (WHO)...**[therefore medical services alone cannot meet our present needs or our desires for the future]
- **3rd: Health and Culture are very closely related...**[They are the essence of that, which makes us what we are]

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ Based on the these facts and the emergence of new telematic technologies, the concept of..

“Modern Asclepieions”

«as ‘networked places’ ... parks, public buildings, sports facilities etc. ... where Health and Culture are promoted in parallel and in harmony»

was crystallised in 1994 in Athens ...

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **What can Modern Asclepieions offer ?**
- **Services to all citizens [not to the sick ones only]**
- **Life-Long Health and Culture promotion [including 'Wellbeing' and 'Environmental' awareness]**
- **Promotion of Social interaction [and thus reduction or avoidance of imposed or voluntary isolation] - a virtual but real world to meet our human needs?**
- **Opportunities for all to 'safely' exploit modern technologies [without social discrimination or exclusion]**
- ➔ **A new model of life and citizen empowerment based on the ancient Greek ideals**

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

◆ What are the ancient Greek ideals?

- Be in an attractive environment where water is a central feature and leave behind the city's tumult ...[stress reduction, peace, reflection, social engagement, discourse, use of the environment →]
- Knowledge is a means to overcome deficiencies ...[life-long education, access to knowledge]
- Have faith – be able to [Trust the God (Asclepios) for help]...[be assured of the service quality-ethics]
- Part of the 'healing process' was involvement in cultural activities, while 'gratitude' was expressed by offering gifts - pieces of art to the park...[be thankful and creative, give back to the society you live in →]
- ➔ Very close to the aspirations of the 'New Information Age' but far away from the realities of everyday life as we experience it today

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **Why Health and Culture services should be offered to all citizens?**
- **Scientific and societal information is a public good and should be available to all with minimal or no charge**
- **Everyone has the right to be part of the society's evolutionary processes** i.e to express opinions, to make proposals and to be engaged in debate with fellow citizens and with the responsible authorities....
- **Everyone needs to safeguard their health, the environment they live in and the good things of their society**
- ➔ **A new responsibility for all, in terms of our self-development and the benefit of a positive life-style with increased social interaction**

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **Services to be designed and offered in MA's**
 - **Societal Information, Education, Employment, Welfare**
 - **Health Promotion, Wellbeing and Healthcare, Counseling, Support for independent living**
 - **Access to all forms of knowledge, Virtual and Real libraries, museums, science parks etc., Participation to new knowledge and societal developments**
 - **Participatory Engagement in cultural activities...**
reading, language, debate, music, dance, theatre, film, sport, physical exercise, use of environment
- ➔ **All types of cultural activities deemed necessary to improve the quality of life... for all capabilities and all age groups.**

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **By whom can the service content be created, updated and maintained?**
 - **Scientific information: by Universities and Schools of Medicine, Public Authorities, Libraries, Museums etc.**
 - **Societal and Other information: by those operating services inside the parks/places of service access**
 - **Participatory Forums: by the citizens and service operators**
 - **Maintenance: by the service operator**

MODERN ASCLEPEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

◆ How could the services be offered to all ?

➤ Use Telematic Technologies - Empower All Citizens

- A 'Portal' for MA's ...Free access to content in the MA's (designated public places) and with free/minimal cost links for home/other users [Tools will provide information on operational characteristics for further developments]

➤ Use Other Media and Current-Day Services ...

- Pamphlets, Books, Audio and Video Tapes, CD's, DVD's, Digital TV etc.
- Current Professional Health, Education, Culture Services

➤ Provide Business Opportunities...

- Licensed/Contracted Providers with Advertisements and Links on the 'MA Portal' - Some material distributed free, some by licensed product sales

MODERN ASCLEPEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

- ◆ **Implementation strategy: Important steps**
- **Meet with Experts and Authorities** ...Seek Expert Advice, Determine Site (s) for MA, set out knowledge and information content for MA Portal
- **Set up a MA Portal and Run Trials...** Include expert, authority and commercial partners, as well as user-representatives...set out guidelines for services and for product licenses/contracts...update all aspects according to trial results
- **Publish Bids for Commercial Contracts/Licenses**
- **Start With a Pilot** →
- ◆ **International Co-operation: UNESCO, WHO, ITU/WSIS, Bi-lateral, Network,**

MODERN ASCLEPEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

◆ Characteristics of MA's:

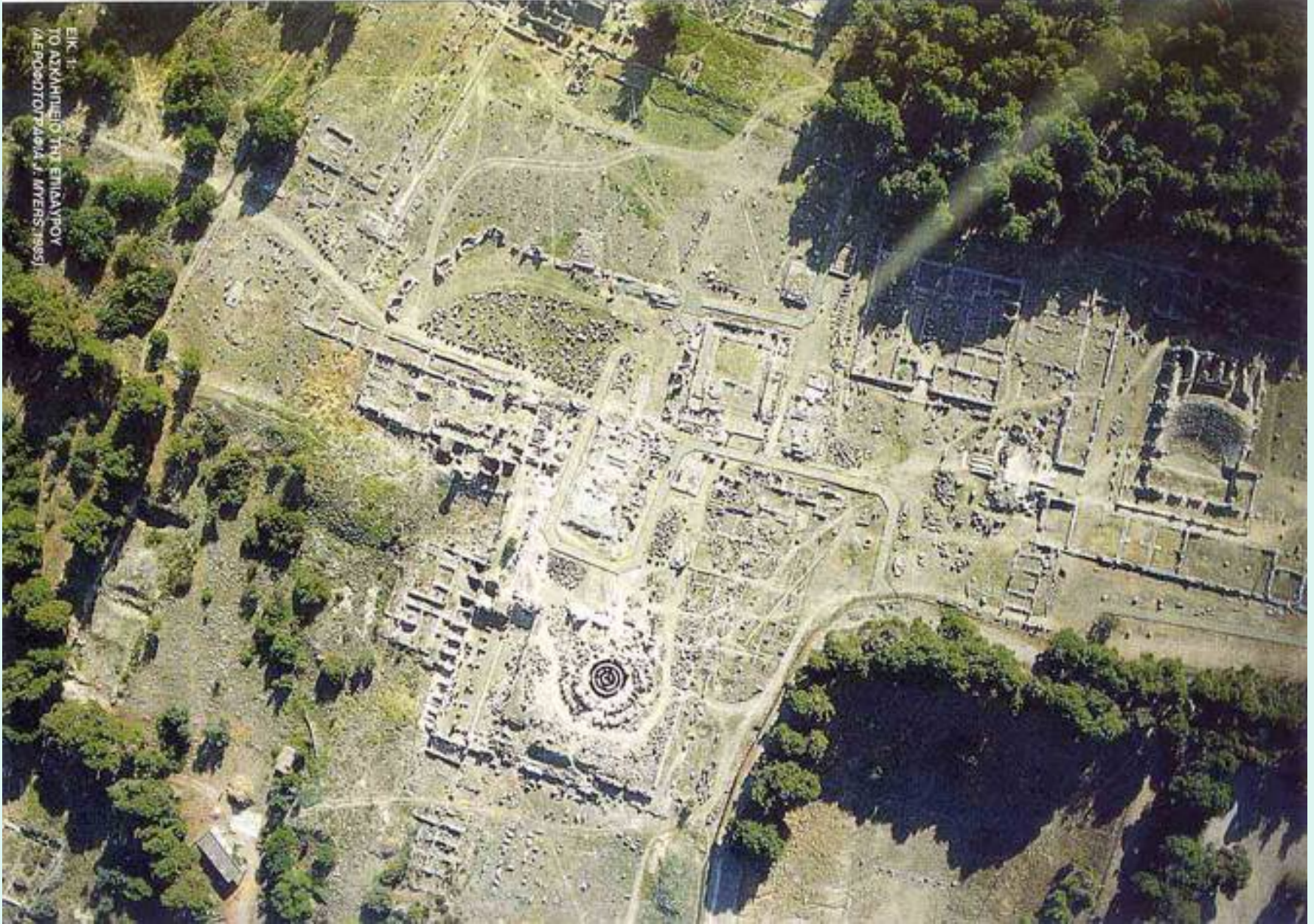
- A basic model can be described and used
- Can be established anywhere – indoor or outdoor
- Can have any size and type
- The bulk of the services' content is the same for any given type of MA and thus economies of scale can be achieved and proliferation is simple
- Every MA can have its own personality
- Networks of MA's can be parts of true Healthcare Systems

MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE

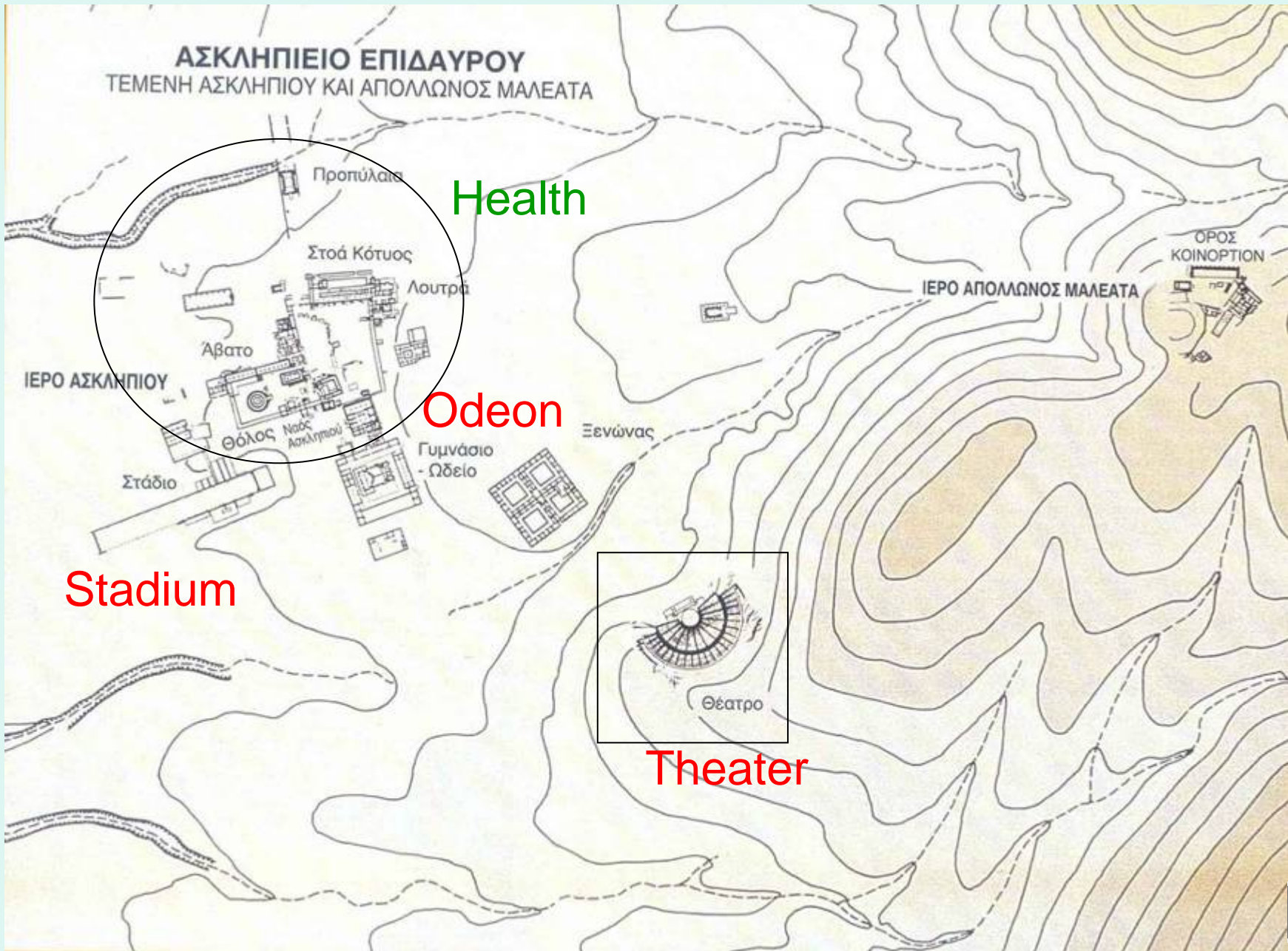
◆ Modern Asclepieions propose:

- a new 'vision' for Health and Culture in the Information Age with empowerment of citizens at its foundation
- a new type of 'institution' for the provision of services associated with Health and Culture
- A faster 'path' to the Information Age [Better and ethically safer exploitation of telematic technologies]
- Better 'alternatives' to today's similar but ailing and inefficient and not integrated services



ΕΙΚ. 1.
ΤΟ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΟ ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΛΑΥΡΟΥ
(ΜΕΡΟΣ ΤΟΥΤΑ ΠΑΡΑΙ. J. MYERS 1995)







MODERN ASCLEPIEIONS

HEALTH <-> CULTURE



- ◆ We are transforming the campus of the School of Medicine of the University of Athens into a Modern Asclepieion (occupies the south-east end of the “Asclepieion Park of Athens” proposed in 1994)
- ◆ We are currently working on the Portals
- ◆ We are working to establish a collaboration between the 7 Schools of Medicine in Greece

