



**Fédération Européenne
des Médecins Salariés**
European Federation
of Salaried Doctors

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Author:	Bulgarian Medical Association		

Bulgarian National Report

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Dear colleagues,

During the past year, a BgMA Regular Report-and-Election Congress in May elected a new leadership of the Association with Dr. Ventsislav Grozev as President. Nearly all the Board were also renewed.

The new leadership declared their commitment to work towards ensuring decent remuneration conditions for the young physicians leaving the country *en masse* (on a large scale). Since the beginning of 2015, over 400 Certificates of Good Standing were issued to physicians applying to work abroad.

So, there is a necessity to ensure greater availability and affordability to specialization and continuing professional development for the doctors, and our operational work should be directed to secure greater financial resources for the healthcare system.

Due to adoption of a restrictive health budget, limitation on the budgets of the medical establishments was administratively imposed in March. It is expressed by a restriction in payments for implemented medical performance up to 90-95% of the registered medical performance in 2014, to the utmost.

Any performance beyond these limits is not paid although it has actually been implemented. This resulted in considerable difficulties within the healthcare system, introduction of waiting lists, reduction in the remunerations of doctors and other medical personnel, increased indebtedness of the hospitals to suppliers and severe restricting the introduction of new diagnostic and therapeutic methods.

The Bulgarian Medical Association stand firmly on the position pro dropping away the limitation of medical activity, for both this year and the following 2016.

Despite the imposed restrictions, there are expectations for a significant budget deficit at the end of the year. As the underfunding of the system is obvious, the Bulgarian Medical Association shall urge for and work towards an update of budget 2015. If the budget remains unchanged, the year of 2016 shall start with a considerable deficiency ensued from 2015, which will greatly affect the system balance.

Important legislative reforms in the field of healthcare have been implemented and are still ongoing. There are two major keypoints that should be noted: first, introduction of basic primary and complementary packages of medical healthcare services and second, the introduction of a National Healthcare Map.

1. The basic primary package shall include diagnostics and treatment of major socially significant diseases and is borne by the state entirely. The complementary package shall include diseases that allow postponing of treatment and shall be implemented mainly by means of waiting lists. There aren't enough allocated funds for financing the complementary package because health insurance fund other than the National Health Insurance Fund doesn't exist. At the same time, some medical activities in the hospital care are planned to be transferred to the outpatient care. In spite of these restrictive *per se* measures, the BgMA worry that funding this will again prove insufficient. The share of outpatient care in Bulgaria is 12-13% of the healthcare system which is very far from being enough to effectively unburden the inpatient care. The aim is increasing the share of outpatient care to 35-40%.
2. The Healthcare Map shall regulate parameters such as maximum number of hospital beds, their utilization, etc. This is a measure that for the first time gives an opportunity for the NHIF to deny contracting payments for health services in regions where there is already an oversupply of certain services.

The BgMA has also launched intensive work on the valuation and costing of medical activities. The purpose of the Bulgarian Medical Association is to enable more adequate remunerations for the medical profession. This will be a change we have long since been looking forward to and, unfortunately, for the time being it is not a fact.

Evidently, a variety of highly dynamic processes are currently ongoing in the healthcare system. Most of them claim to enhance its functioning but nevertheless the Bulgarian Medical Association carefully monitor the development of good ideas and intentions into real practical implementations.