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A New Organization Model For Setting Physician Fee Schedules In Turkey

Remuneration of medical services rendered by physicians by fairly compensating and protecting labors of particularly physicians employed in public sector taking the ever changing conditions of inflation and costs in our age into consideration is one of major tasks of physician organizations.

For this purpose, Turkish Medical Association (TMA) is authorized by law for defining medical services provided by physicians, their practical implementation and minimum fee schedule constituting their remuneration. The minimum fee schedule is published as a handbook by TMA, every two or three years since TMA has been established.

In parallel to changing global and national conditions, growing electronic media facilities and demand for access to information, rapidly evolving new information items and consequently very rapidly changing fund of knowledge – the use of minimum fee schedule by issuing in form of a handbook has become inconvenient in recent times. Recently minimum fee schedule are

TMA has changed the name of minimum fee schedule into “fee schedule”, updated it in line with recently changing conditions, eliminated its deficiencies and created a new schedule in form of a database taking statutory requirements into account and has put this schedule into practice as an online application, put into effect in the year 2015. This has enabled meeting the needs for revision or updating related with this application arising in time periodically and far more easily.

The schedule put into service on electronic media has been prepared as such that only subscribed users of TMA (<http://huv.ttb.dr.tr/loginform.php>) website can view it. This schedule is not open to opinions and review of public and non-subscribers. The schedule can be viewed and used by subscribing annually by medical business concerns, physicians providing medical services and health support funds and health insurers classified as purchasers of medical services, each of whom are specified by an independent code.

TMA has created a “work group” in this respect by issuing a new directive, in order to institutionalize fee schedules in a democratically participatory approach and has initiated a work process as necessary to determine physician fees by protecting rights and benefits of physicians, as well as ensuring development and implementation of medical profession in line with public and individual interests.

The work group consists of branch and commission delegates, council members of TMA, delegates to be assigned by medical chambers and delegates of medical specialty associations, to be elected every 2 years. This group also embodies an executive board and an advisory board.

The advisory board providing guidance to the executive board consists of delegates from Ministry of Health, Ministry of Family Affairs, Labor and Social Security, Social Security Institution, the executive board of the work group, private hospitals and medical body associations, Association of Insurance and Reinsurance Corporations of Turkey, private health and retirement insurers and funds.

In conclusion, medical unions and organizations have an obvious role in the determination of physician fees, taking labor, time and risks involved with medical services, the society’s purchasing power and similar criteria into account. Here, we aim to inform you about this new organization we have initiated recently and to enrich it with your valuable contribution and criticism.