

# **Program Statement by the Government of the Slovak Republic – part 4- Health policy**

The government is interested in setting up a health care system based on the following principles:

- The state creates the conditions for the healthy development and life of the individual, it creates the conditions for providing quality and affordable health care as well as for supporting and enlightening the healthy way of life and the rights of its citizens.
- The State guards and provides, in public and economic interest on the basis of public health insurance, free healthcare, the extent of which is necessary to provide such health care that leads to life saving, cure of disease, avoidance of serious health complications, prevention of worsening of disease severity; Its transition to chronic stage, effective prevention, disease detection, mitigation of disease, as well as other necessary interventions related to the provision of such health care. The state provides such health care in guaranteed availability and takes into account the efficiency and effectiveness of public resources to ensure the widest availability of quality health care.
- Everyone has an interest in maintaining and improving their health and actively striving to do their utmost within their capabilities.
- Everyone has the right, by his own decision, to ensure a higher standard of services related to the health care provided or to choose health care which is not necessary and goes beyond the scope of public health insurance and does not endanger his health .
- The state is interested in providing such health care to improve and extend the quality of life maximize the economic activity of citizens.

The main program objectives of the government in the health sector will be:

- Patient first
- Transparency
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Dignity of the profession
- Development, renewal and modernization.

## The patient first

Patients expect to ensure dignified and fair conditions in the access of healthcare workers and the availability of healthcare provided. It is also necessary to ensure that the solidarity system guarantees protection and dignity for the most vulnerable social groups, disadvantaged and chronically ill citizens in providing free health care. However, it is necessary to separate the needs of the patient, who are not subject to the necessary treatment based on current medical evidence, from the needs of health services. In the area of these objectives, the government is committed *to shortening waiting times for health and nursing care*, as well as introducing maximum waiting times for planned hospital surgeries and improving the quality of buildings and departments of regional hospitals.

The government will also prepare *the introduction of transparent rules for patient payments* and the establishment of a multi-source financing system. Define the rules for the organization and operation of the minimum mandatory network of guaranteed First Aid Medical Service (LSPPs) for adults and children, as well as 24-hour Dental and Pharmacy Emergency Services. The other part of the LSPP recommends that it be kept as an additional option with shorter traffic. The government will guarantee support for decent and free access for the most disadvantaged and disadvantaged among the socially disadvantaged.

## Transparency

Transparency is one of the basic assumptions of trust. The basic pillar of restoring citizens' and healthcare confidence in effective and fair health is to increase transparency at all levels of the system. From purchases of goods and services through the occupation of executive and supervisory bodies of individual institutions and medical facilities to fair access for all patients to adequate health care. In this area, the government will ensure a *visible shift in the quality of healthcare provision in the transparent management of public resources*. Everything is public, while publishing or not disclosing information must not involve an undue commercial advantage for any entity.

The Ministry of Health (MZ SR) will create the conditions for transparent selection procedures for filling the positions of directors of hospitals and specialized institutes with clear transparent rules as well as rules for occupying control functions in the key organs of the MZ SR institutions ( State Healthcare Insurance Company (VŠZP), Health Care Surveillance Office ( ÚDZS), hospitals and other bed healthcare facilities ). *Provide representation of the opposition and other bodies (professional organizations, professional financial control, third sector) in the control bodies of the General Health Insurance Company and the Health Care Surveillance Office.*

The Government will immediately start with the gradual centralization of the transparent procurement of state hospitals at the level of the Ministry of Health and the publication of contracts lists.

### **Efficiency and effectiveness**

Public resources must be redistributed in the system so as to reflect as accurately as possible the real cost of individual healthcare, with a strong emphasis on the efficient and effective management of such funds. The principle of zero tolerance against the uneconomic spending of funds at any level of healthcare must apply. In order to efficiently and effectively spend public resources, the health sector will implement a number of systemic measures:

- A thorough revision of all operational contracts of public hospitals - catering, parking, rental of business premises, laundry, watch keeping and effective measures to eliminate disadvantageous contracts;
- Reviewing the activities of the VŠZP, ÚDZS and the Ministry of Health in the field of controlling the management of public resources and compliance with generally binding legal regulations,
- Rigorous comparison of the prices of special medical material and medical technology, reducing the consumption of medicinal products while preserving the availability and quality of the provided health care, With a view to adopting measures to increase efficiency in the management of public resources, a binding change in the procurement of all appliances and technology through electronic market-place,
- Reassessment of the final network of hospitals with regard to geographic, financial and regional needs as well as patient safety. The objective of such a review will be to ensure optimization of the hospital bedside fund according to the needs of the regions, highlighting the quality of chronic beds, optimizing the outpatient healthcare system, centralizing medical-intensive and specialized activities, adequate access to necessary health care.
- The preparation and implementation of a list of health care outcomes in outpatient healthcare *and the introduction of full DRG for hospitals.*
- *Full implementation of the e-Health system in 2017.*

The Government will prepare a concept and legislative-expert framework for determining the scope and rules of public resource use based on the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and solidarity of the distribution of public resources. To achieve optimal availability of healthcare provided, according to approved diagnostic and therapeutic procedures through guaranteed categorized performances. The Government will prepare rules for the expedience of spending public resources, which will also be

realized *by limiting the profits of health insurance companies*, in compliance with EU and SR law.

The Government will focus primarily on the use of research capacities in the medical sciences, with a major focus on clinical research with a direct impact on the patient in order to tackle acutely serious diseases in Slovakia.

### **Occupational dignity**

The nature of healthcare, and in particular its perception by citizens and patients, is primarily formed by doctors, nurses and other health workers. It is therefore important that they are fairly and transparently remunerated and have adequate conditions for training as well as the actual exercise of their profession. However, it is also important to create and promote a system of leadership of moral and professional authorities that will be a positive example for the next generation of new healthcare workers as well as a strong pillar for strengthening the social status of health workers.

Government will give priority to morality, expertise and diligence. Every senior employee is also responsible for the nature of healthcare and must take personal responsibility primarily for his / her ethical and fundamental management failures.

The government will support and promote healthcare workers' merit based merit-based principles.

The revision of the credit model of education and the re-evaluation of competencies in non-health care professions will create conditions for increasing the attractiveness of employment in the health care profession in order to attract new employees.

The Government will optimize the comprehensive model of training of health workers in order to promote a balanced geographic distribution of teaching in Slovakia based on established European standards.

### **Development, renewal and upgrading**

In addition to ensuring the efficient and efficient operation of healthcare facilities, it is also necessary to invest in the future. Over the next few years, effective long-term measures need to be put in place to ensure the rehabilitation and modernization of healthcare facilities within the jurisdiction of the state. With regard to socio-economic changes as well as the development of approaches and knowledge in the area of medical, pharmaceutical and technological progress, it is crucial to define the socio-economic consensus on the basic principles and direction of the development and future of Slovak healthcare:

- **The Government will, in cooperation with the professional public, Slovakia's healthcare development strategy for 20 years.**
- **It will assume the obligation to build and bring into operation a new university hospital in Bratislava with the optimization of the current UNB bed capacity fund.**
- **The government is aware of the importance of a residency program for general medicine as well as of specialist groups in missing departments and graduate practice in dentistry. It is also aware of the support for the revitalization of outpatient care in the area of strengthening integrated health care.**
- **The Government will create the conditions for a regular annual investment in the rehabilitation and development of healthcare facilities within the jurisdiction of the state.**