Common recommendations for the healthcare system 2030

For many years, Slovakia has felt the need to make comprehensive changes in the healthcare sector that would lead to a sustainable and high-quality healthcare system. On the one hand, the Slovak healthcare system is facing a lack of finances, on the other hand, the current system is to some extent inefficient and resources are being wasted. In such an environment, groups with different interests oppose one another, resulting in a smaller chance of mutual understanding and agreement on major changes and prioritization.

It is therefore important to create a platform involving all stakeholders with the intention of formulating the starting points for a specific and clearly defined grasp of the issues of the future of Slovak health care. Based on our analysis, which was developed during the second half of 2019 in cooperation with more than 20 health care entities, we came up with 10 points for better health care:

1. Health care with a clear vision, concept and comprehensible rules of the game / POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

   REASON
   Slovakia needs a clear vision, concept and comprehensible rules of the game, which will not be the subject of political-trade agreements. This is a necessary first step for Slovakia to begin implementing the complex changes that have been unsuccessfully attempted for many years, leading to a better and sustainable healthcare system.

   SOLUTION
   Apolitical scholarly discussion. We propose the creation of an informal platform through which the Ministry of Health and other relevant bodies of public administration will conduct an open and transparent discussion with all relevant sectorial partners on sustainable and high-quality “Slovak Healthcare 2030” and define the competences of individual health system stakeholders.

2. Healthcare with responsible budgeting / FORECASTABILITY OF REVENUE, EXPENDITURE AND INVESTMENT

   REASON
   In the near future, the aging of the Slovak population will have a significant impact on the change in cost structure and on the overall growth in healthcare costs in the Slovak Republic. The current system of its financing is not sustainable in the medium and long term. It is therefore essential that we look for solutions to the financing model and health insurance system so that it does not adversely affect patients and insurance payers.

   SOLUTION
   It is necessary to financially prioritize areas in line with the demographic trend and to set a predictable financial environment that will create stable conditions for all stakeholders. Funding must also provide sufficient investment resources to reduce investment debt. In line with the value for money principle and result-based budgeting, it is important that goal setting is made in accordance with the size of the package. The objectives must be proportionate with the budget and at the same time the budget should reflect the needs and objectives of the patients and of the sector.

3. Stable regulatory environment / CLEAR LEGISLATION GUARANTEEING THE PREDICTABILITY OF REGULATION

   REASON
   Increasingly, we are witnessing a legislative “whirlwind” - especially through parliamentary proposals, and it is extremely difficult to be able to navigate such frequent changes in laws, not to mention being able to plan strategic funding. Laws are changing today without detailed impact studies and without the necessary financial coverage. Rapid, unprepared and uncommunicated legislative changes represent an interference with the stability of the system and endanger the functioning of the entities.

   SOLUTION
   Introducing transparency and predictability in the process of adopting legislative changes through the mandatory commenting of parliamentary bills. Applying the same principles as in government bills. Professionalism and expertise in tabling legislative changes through Members’ amendments. Members’ proposals, including amendments, must include a detailed impact assessment.
and interpreting data will benefit all stakeholders like in the healthcare system. All decisions taken will be based on generally accepted data and the impact of these decisions will be evaluated over time. In doing so, it is ideal to use the potential of electronization and the introduction of e-health so that reporting is not just an annoying bureaucratic duty.

with a clearer definition of stakeholders (or will show where the claim is difficult or even impossible to define). Gradual steps (e.g. by defining a claim at least in waiting times or administrative services) can help move this issue forward.

to direct the patient to the appropriate places in the social system and vice versa, minimizing bureaucratic, communication and other burdens on the patient. Defining claims in the health and social spheres. Opening up topics such as palliative care, hospice care and dying in the health sector. When assessing healthcare costs, take into account direct costs (e.g. medicine, outpatient care, hospital care) as well as indirect costs (e.g. loss of productivity of the patient or his / her family members and resulting tax losses, income shortfall to pension funds) etc.

Motivating environment for healthcare professionals

/ HIGH QUALITY OF WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

REASON

The health sector is dependent on human resources. Like the rest of the population, this one is also aging, and it is assumed to have a shortage of labor (especially doctors, nurses), persistent high workload, poor working conditions, low remuneration for the work of the most valuable kind - care for the health and lives of people and the resulting migration and mobility.

SOLUTION

Creating a stable working environment for healthcare workers, which will motivate them to remain in the sector, for their daily work and for their career from abroad. Sufficient remuneration for work, motivation of graduates, strengthening the competencies of healthcare workers and appropriate environment at workplaces have the ambition to contribute to stability. The related emphasis on quality is no less important. It is the quality of the healthcare provided that should be considered when rewarding both healthcare providers and individual healthcare professionals.

Efficiency and public control

/ BRING THE HIGHEST VALUE OF COSTS TRANSPARENCY, MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

REASON

Until recently, there was no systematic monitoring and evaluation of health system indicators at the level of public administration in Slovakia. So far, mortality attributable by health care became the only target indicator for the entire sector. There are a number of comprehensive frameworks around the world for setting, monitoring and evaluating health objectives. Despite the achievements in transparency (publication of contracts and some data), there are still large setbacks in the publication of data that are directly related to public health insurance resources.

SOLUTION

Introduction of clearly named, measurable health objectives, with a set timeframe. These should concern both medical and health indicators as well as financial efficiency. There should be a benchmarking with foreign countries (at least with the Czech Republic) and the responsibility of specific entities to achieve these results. It is necessary to process and publish the widest possible range of data that would be subject to public scrutiny.

The full version of the document can be found at: https://amcham.sk/news/23256/common-recommendations-for-reporting-moneyflows