



D-r Bujar Osmani, Minister of Health

Aware that the health is the most important segment not only to the individual, but to the society as well, as well as conscious for the responsibilities and the enormous need for promotion of the processes in this department, we promised that we will serve the health in the Republic of Macedonia at the moment we took up this assignment. Considering that I have been involved in the health department before, I have felt that being a physician is an honorable and hard profession and I have seen that the patients are in very unfavorable position. When I added my experience as a physician in the health department in the western countries to all of this, it helped me understand that our health system should be reformed as soon as possible, which would result with appreciation of the work of the medical officers, patients' satisfaction with the health services, and successful health department in the Republic of Macedonia. Because Macedonia is still in the era of its transition, this unquestionably means a series of reforms which should be implemented in order for our country to get closer to the developed countries of the civilized world. In terms of the health department, this would also mean that our efforts should be in a direction of creating a health system in accordance with the advanced contemporary standards. These reforms, which are now being implemented in our ministry, are above all guided by the principle of creating functional health department, which would focus on the patient as its "consumer". Because of that, our purpose is to formulate a system which would generate patients who would be aware that the prevention of the illness is the key for successful treatment. Because of that, a series of immunization programs, which have a purpose to prevent the illnesses and to create a preventive health system, have been developed. In this direction, we, as a ministry, made opportunities for giving various vaccines and organizing preventive controls. In this context we can mention the vaccine against

Haemophilus influenzae type B (HIB) – as mandatory since September 2008, vaccine against Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) – for protection from cervical cancer, the campaign for free PAP tests (it is planned 13.000 PAP tests to be carried out until the end of the year), then ECHO and mammographic controls (for women of over 40 years of age), colorectal cancer screening for prevention large bowel cancer, as well as series of other programs which are expected to be implemented next year, such as the flue protection program, disease protection program, as well as separate programs for taking care of patients with rare diseases etc.

Still, as it is already known, the health department is a wider department and it includes several sectors and subsectors and an all-inclusive engagement is needed in order to include all of them in this system of reforms. That is why it was necessary to work in several areas in the same time.

As far as the part of the primary, secondary, and tertiary health protection is concerned, we have implemented a number of projects, helping them promote these health sectors, which are useful to our final objective. Eighteen infirmaries were opened in various locations, mostly in the rural areas, the emergency aid was reorganized, the Institute for Health Protection was reconstructed, we provided state-of-the-art medical technology, we implemented the DRG payment system, we introduced additional payment according to the activity of the medical officer, while other smaller activities of this sector are also ongoing.

Because our objective is also to improve the health conditions, we adopted the new Law on Medicaments in this direction, which would not only establish order in the system of taking and giving medicaments, but also has a purpose to create awareness among the patients to visit their physician more frequently, which would unquestionably be favorable for their overall health.

When we say that the patient is the reason for our existence, we carry that out with our work. In the past few months, we made efforts for respecting the rights of the patient by creating a separate service which would be responsible for their rights.

The public health, where reforms were and still are made for perfection of its services, is also one of the most important segments of the health department. If we interpret all these activities, programs, and projects in numbers, we would see that we have spent more than 100 million denars for realization of these objectives in a period of three months, we have built 10 operating rooms, and we have procured 32 dialysis machines.

Generally speaking, there are a lot of activities, but the employees of the Ministry of Health and me as a minister of this department feel these activities are just a part of our obligations. We are determined the process to continue until the fulfillment of our obligations and until the complete implementation of the reforms in the health department.

Bujar Osmani