

Wonca Europe Council Meeting Warsaw 2011, September 8th

Agenda Topic Template

AGENDA TOPIC: Quo vadis, Family Medicine ?

SUBMITTER: The Romanian National Society of Family Medicine

Type of Item (Bold/Underline the Type): **Information** Discussion Motion

INTRODUCTION:

The Romanian National Society of Family Medicine would first and foremost like to thank for the wonderful support it has received this year, through the visit of the Wonca Europe president - Tony Mathie - as well as the Wonca World president - Richard Roberts. Their real effort to visit their Romanian colleagues is greatly appreciated.

RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION:

There is still more to be done. For what concerns our specialty, the need of having better general practitioners, as well as in what concerns the constant fight to gain the rightful place for our specialty.

We have started on this road and, as Wonca family members, we will know better and better what we have to do.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS/WEB LINKS:

www.snmf.eu

Full text Below

Date: 1st of August, 2011

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President,

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Signature:



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Quo vadis, Family Medicine ?

The Romanian National Society of Family Medicine would first and foremost like to thank for the wonderful support it has received this year, through the visit of the Wonca Europe president – Tony Mathie – as well as the Wonca World president – Richard Roberts. Their real effort to visit their Romanian colleagues is greatly appreciated. First of all, our colleagues had a chance to better understand what lies ahead and what are the most important aspects of the development of our specialty directly from the two presidents. Secondly, the authorities have been given more reason to think upon primary care, which we hope will give future results.

During the last years, family medicine has had a paradoxical journey.

On the one hand, more and more countries understand the importance and the efficiency of family medicine in their medical systems. There are WHO recommendations, important proof and recommendations from countries which have solid and well developed health systems.

On the other hand, there are plenty of countries where the development of primary care is not taken into consideration, or is even considered as dangerous competition by other specialties.

Romania is on a difficult path, ascending nevertheless, in spite of the current climate. In theory, we always have the recognition of primary health care from the Government and other authorities. However, every year we run into more and more obstacles. Oftentimes, the general practitioner's medical act is disregarded, while the bureaucratic act, more and more complex and time consuming, is forced upon.

In 2011, Romanian general practitioners had to confront the blackmailing of the National Health Insurance House. We had to go to Court to be listened. We were shocked to find that the new Contract stated that if we refuse to sign the contracts, doctors from different specialties would simply take over the general practitioners' activity. The new contract forced a more drastic prescription limit for our practice for subsidized drugs, even though we have one of the lowest spending per patient in Europe for subsidized drugs and compensation is already made at the reference price of the cheapest product of the therapeutic class (not of the active substance). We had to reject and try to improve a contract that brought to bankruptcy many of our practices.

Another issue we had to bring to court was a law which forced all doctors to buy everything needed for electronic health cards and other IT projects, which are compulsory, not optional. We already have the sad experience of a mandatory national IT system that is supposed to be progress, but still has very numerous errors 3 years on, in spite of our full cooperation to solve them.. These errors affect the rights of our patients to receive the medical services they need and the right of the GP to get paid.

Out-of-hours care also became mandatory for GPs this year.

We had to resort to justice - we still have ongoing trials.

As a last resort, We had to block our activity in the contract with the National Health Insurance House.

For 10 days, we took care of our patients and did our job without any contract with the National Health Insurance House and without asking for medical fees from our patients. We communicated constantly, we collaborated throughout the country, and we persuaded the news media that we can no longer continue this way.

We gave up when we thought it might put our patients in danger – they were left without subsidized medication – and when we decided that the threats of the authorities became too much. What did we gain this year? The appreciation of the colleagues from all the specialties for the courage, organization and solidarity we have proven. The understanding of our patients who realized that we are the most concerned persons about their health problems. We managed to change some paragraphs of the contract which were hurting the specialty itself or adding more limits for our patients.

Where did we fail? We did not manage to modify the worsening financial status of primary care. We did not manage to improve the aggressive attitude, the lack of transparency when it comes to the money spent by the National Health Insurance House.

There is still more to be done. For what concerns our specialty, the need of having better general practitioners, as well as in what concerns the constant fight to gain the rightful place for our specialty.

We have started on this road and, as Wonca family members, we will know better and better what we have to do.

Dr. Rodica Tanasescu

President

Romanian National Society of Family Medicine -