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Report on the health care situation in the Czech republic (May 2010 – September 2011)

The main task especially on the beginning was to ensure the fulfilment of the Memorandum (our February agreement with the Ministry of Health). The base salary increase by 25% was implemented in the overwhelming majority of Czech hospitals. Only few hospitals (in areas where are not local LOK - Trade Union of Doctors organizations established) regulated the conditions differently.

At the same time all the new health care law proposals were presented to Parliament - which reminded “legislative tornado”. All relevant institutions have submitted large amount of comments on these proposals, often quite substantial, but not many of them were considered. The biggest problem is that the terms “standard” and “extras” were here defined without a clear determining which medical performance - so far funded by health insurance as a “standard” - will become “extras”. The proposals were accepted so rapidly that the government parties’ amendment document itself contained over 60 pages of text. Quickness was the main criterion, not quality. I think, the real key is, that privatization steps were not included in the approved proposals.

Our current problem is the preparation of payment regulations for next year for each segment of health care providers. Financial plan for hospitals for next year is only about 95% of this year budget, which is totally insufficient volume of finances, especially because a further increase of health Professional’s base salary is planned. Minister of Health declared publicly that the fulfilment of the Memorandum was his political priority. Therefore the payment regulations and the planned regulation on personal standards will be the top priority in negotiations with the Minister of health.

I do believe, that in our meeting in Catania, I will be able to confirm that everything proceeds according to the signed agreement. Otherwise we would have to defend our rights sharply again.

Prague, September 02, 2011

Dr. Martin Engel, chairman of the Czech Doctors' Trade Union (LOK-SCL)