



Non-governmental Organisation “Emancipimi Civil Ma
Ndryshe”
EC MA NDRYSHE

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PRESS RELEASE

Prizren’s primary health care facing many deficiencies in organizing the on-duty work

As part of the project of monitoring the work of the municipal executive of Prizren, during the first half of March EC Ma Ndryshe has considered the issue of reimbursement of the on-duty work in primary health care in Prizren municipality.

A several weeks research conducted from EC Ma Ndryshe has revealed the fact that, although considerable funds have been collected from the patients’ co-payments during the year 2012, those were not sufficient enough in covering the compensation of on-duty works, respectively to even the obligations towards the medical staff employed in primary health care, although this is guaranteed by the Sectoral Collective Contract. This has caused for some Family Medicine Centres (*further referred to as FMCs*) to be closed over weekends for several months now.

The data extracted from the Municipal Health Directorate (*further referred to as MHD*) show that in the year 2012 around €196,000 were collected by co-payments, whereas about €30,000 have been carried forward from the year 2011, which in total make €225,000. From these funds over €90,000 were allocated for the payment of on-duty works, whereas about €88,000 were spent on the wages of the primary health care employees.

“[...] With these funds accumulated from the co-payments we have filled up the “minus” incurred in the category of the employees’ wages. This “minus” in wages for the year 2012 has occurred as a result of an error in wages and salaries planning for the year 2012 by the Ministry of Finance,” states in the response of MDH addressed to EC Ma Ndryshe, where it is noted that the remaining debt for the accrued on-duty work hours for the year 2012 is €35,000.

During this period EC Ma Ndryshe has conducted interviews with primary health care employees who voiced their discontent about the non-payment of the on-duty work from September of the last year until January of this year, while there are delays exceeding 6 months in the payments of previously accomplished on-duty work. According to them, the on-duty works were paid regularly since the end of the war until September 2012, when such practice has ceased, which has consequently led to the closure of FMC-1, FMC-2 and FMC-3 on the weekends. The respondents explained that the reimbursement starting February has brought the reinstatement of the work only of FMC-1 at weekends, while FMC-2 and FMC-3 still do not work.

These claims were confirmed by the heads of Primary Health Care, the director of MDH, Mr. Nexhip Berisha, and the director of FMC, Mr. Mehmedali Gashi. In one of their public responses they have acknowledged that, “[...] since September of the last year some of the on-duty works during weekends were cut down in some of the FMCs due to inability for their compensation. On-duty works are paid to the staff solely from the revenues accrued from the co-payments. Another reason was that by this reduction we have managed to save other expenses such as on

central heating, electricity, etc. The then manner of on-duty work we have organized in centres with smaller number of patients during weekends. During this period patients were not harmed in any way, as they received health services in the MFMC (Main Family Medicine Centre), which has been providing services in 24-hour basis.”

EC Ma Ndryshe considers these justifications do not stand for the simple fact that Primary Health Care has generated enough revenues from co-payments to provide on-duty work, respectively providing 24-hour health care services in all the FMCs. However, inappropriate inter-institutional coordination has led to errors in planning of salaries and wages for the year 2012. Furthermore, the call on saving on the heating, electricity, etc. is meaningless since the operation of those FMCs is based on legal provisions set out for Primary Health Care.

By addressing the concerns of the residents of these neighbourhoods, EC Ma Ndryshe calls upon the municipal executive that within the shortest possible time to clarify differences or errors with MoF (Ministry of Finance) in order to have proper planning of wages and salaries, as well as on-duty work, so that the citizens of Prizren get adequate medical services on 24-hour basis.

EC Ma Ndryshe herein requests from the heads of the MFMC and MDH, but also from the central level, to become more careful when carrying out their institutional responsibilities thus avoiding recurring situations when, due to their errors, the citizens suffer and the 24-hour health service is omitted.

EC Ma Ndryshe recommends also the members of the Municipal Assembly of Prizren to be more committed in tackling the everyday troubles of citizens, but also in overseeing the operations and finances of the municipal executive.

EC Ma Ndryshe’s project for transparency monitoring of the executive branch shall continue on publicizing monitoring findings through regular press releases and project’s website where the findings are posted directly from the monitoring staff. By now, all the monitoring findings, including regular press releases and other information relative to local government of Prizren, are published on regular basis on the project’s website: www.online-transparency.org.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Elmedina BAXHAKU, Monitoring Staff
NGO EC Ma Ndryshe
Ismet J. Kumanova Street, No. 31, Prizren
Zeki Shulemaja Street, No. 2, Prishtina
www.ecmandryshe.org & info@ecmandryshe.org
+381 38 224 967 & +381 29 222 771



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