**Current trends of medical care in EU countries**

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Primary care and community health are increasingly seen as a viable and effective alternative to existing hospital care systems, but Europe’s population is traditionally focused on healthcare in hospitals. Hospitals are increasingly engaged in the treatment of cardiovascular, cancer and certain surgical problems, and not infectious diseases and urgent surgical cases. The emergence of new medical technologies and techniques has led to significant expansion of opportunities and, at the same time, reduced the average duration of active treatment. Hospital beds are used more intensively and hospitals serve more patients, using expensive technologies, equipment, devices and medications.

On average, about 30–40 % of all surgical operations in Western Europe are based on “one day” model. It means that the patient is hospitalized, operated and discharged from the hospital for one day. Comprehensive medical and surgical care of the highest level requires the concentration of resources and skilled specialists in larger organizations, since ordinary hospitals can not do all kinds of medical care.

As before, in EU countries, more than half of all health care expenditures go from hospital to hospital: from 50 to 75 %. The basis for determining the nature, functions and structure of medical services are different rules and it makes it difficult to understand the true meaning of the differences between them. All this leads to the need to reduce the number of “expensive” beds for urgent patients and to use alternatives such as communal health care and primary care facilities where patients undergo long course of treatment. Thus, many small hospitals where emergency medical care is provided was communicated to communal services, and some of them were even closed.

Regarding public hospitals previously run by central or local authorities, there is a tendency for these hospitals to be transferred to regional authorities such as medical foundations, federations of hospitals or district councils. The role of the state, which now provides the most part of medical services (80 %), is decreasing, and private hospitals are trying to improve their economic situation by consolidation and merger.

The development of healthcare in Europe is based on the widespread use of information technology and new advances in biomedical and clinical research. The main objective is to enable all citizens of European countries to have an electronic patient card that would provide reliable access to confidential health information posted on the computer network. The aim of the Yinsha is to “link all healthcare professionals and managers with a telemetry system to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases”. Thus, information networks, multimedia, artificial intelligence, sensors, telemetry medicine and robotics combined with new discoveries in the field of medicine will create a new foundation for the development of health care. A computerized data link with computerized diagnostics will be of great benefit to patients, professionals working in medicine, and governments who are interested in saving money, improving the quality of health care, and achieving better health outcomes. Currently, in severe medical cases, general practitioners from small hospitals or clinics often receive real-time consultations from specialists working at university research centers. Ordinary are also “virtual” operations conducted by surgeons at a distance using computer images and robotics.

Primary health services will continue to be provided locally, and most patients will be able to receive medical care and treatment along with their homes or even at home. This serves as a confirmation of the actual separation of the three essential stages of the provision of medical care for diagnosis, treatment, and care of the patient. These stages will be carried out separately in different places, but with the coordination of doctors acting as representatives of the patient. Small clinical laboratories are likely to disappear, and laboratory diagnosis will be done in large, highly automated regional and national centers.

Hospital management is organized in accordance with the types of medical services (matrix organization) when the medical care of the patient is considered as a separate project. Work in the team and production units are the most important factors in the provision of medical care. The most important elements of the health care system are the skills and knowledge of professionals, as well as the achievement of maximum efficiency in their use.

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