

Editorial

Dear readers,

We would like to share with you our views on the problems of the profession of nurse, which are common for both the Czech and Slovak Republics.

By approval of the amendment to the Act No. 96/2004 Coll. on non-medical health-care jobs, decreasing the level of qualification preparation for the profession and limiting requirements for whole-life education, our representatives proved to more than 100,000 nurses what this demanding job means to them and how they appreciate it. The relevant amendment that passed third reading in the Chamber of Deputies does not solve stabilisation and improvement of current system of education as well as lack of nurses. The suggested concept will bring chaos in the health-care resort, impair interpersonal, already tensed relationships and, most of all, decline prestige of the general nurse profession. Health care nowadays requires mature, knowledgeable experts and highly qualified workers capable to cope with extreme psycho-social load. It is obviously clear that a graduate of a new concept based on combination of secondary and higher education will not be able to provide care for patients due to, inter alia, increasing psycho-social immaturity of the youth. It is only a matter of time when the consequences of these decisions will reflect in decreased quality and safety of the provided care. This is clearly confirmed by the world experience. As by our representatives we have been several times reminded that results of world research cannot be accepted flatly, they are useless and not usable for our country, we would like to note that the Czech Republic is not the only country dealing with the lack of nurses and problems of health-care staff education, but it seems to be the first one to solve these problems this particular way. In the USA lack of nurses was solved by higher quality of education; in Thailand it was found out that nurses with university education improve working relations in teams; in Australia the research was enriched by the fact that university education eliminates burn-out syndrome at nurses; in Great Britain they found out that nurses with university education contribute in high rate to patients' safety and in Pennsylvania the analyses of study results proved that higher education has affect on decrease of death risk and rate of live saving failure. In the Czech Republic lack of nurses is handled by decreasing the level of qualification education or the Ministry wants to "treat" this problem by a totally absurd proposal of a one-year study in a higher vocational school. The question is, why those who decide about us do not focus on real reasons of lack of nurses? It would be sufficient to create such conditions for performance of nursing profession that would enable educated non-medical professionals to apply obtained competences, taking demanding performance into consideration for rewarding nurses and other members of nursing team and support education of nurses by higher capacities in educational institutions preparing nurses – in colleges and universities. For sustainable development of nursing profession it is necessary to reflect working performance of nurses to the Regulation on Payments, to change minimum personnel requirements that do not meet requests for quality and safety of health care and result in overload of nurses and other nursing personnel. Last but not least, we need a system of meaningful whole-life education suitable for professional development of nurses and other non-medical health-care workers.

The main precondition for provision of nursing care is a continual improvement of its quality, however, by a decreased level of education it only declines. In our opinion, this change in nursing education will not bring expected results – as was already proved in the past. On the other hand, discussions about the amendment to the Act No. 96/2004 led to active interest in education of nurses by the society, non-expert public, patients, applicants for health-care professions as well as health-care professionals. Unlike the legislators, they very seriously consider the arguments presented by professional organisations (ČAS, SVVS, POUZP) pointing to decrease of quality of provided care resulting from the proposed legislation on qualification nursing education.

We can all just wish for the nursing problems to be solved systematically and with respect to the profession of nurse.

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