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Luxembourg report on The Hospital Sector 2007 – 2008

Before coming to the Hospital Sector, I want to give you some information about the general evolution in the Luxembourg Health Care Sector.

Therefore I give you the information which the Health Care Minister Mr Mars Di Bartolomeo gave us last week during the Spring Meeting of the “Comité Quadripartite” (representing members of Government, Health Care and Social Minister, Financial Ministry, representatives of the National Health Insurance Company, representatives of Trade Unions and last but not least the representatives of Health Care providers: the hospitals, the doctors, the pharmacists and the laboratories).

- First, the Minister had the pleasure to announce that the financial balance 2007 was positive, all sectors evaluated.
- Second, the discussions about the means for saving costs continues as well in the hospital sector as in the extra-hospital sector (guidelines for prescribing less antibiotics, common efforts of hospitals to buy under better conditions medical technologies and so on).

Concerning the hospital sector, the Minister announced a new hospital plan for Autumn, where the different categories of Luxembourg Hospitals will be redefined (general hospitals, regional hospitals and hospitals of proximity).

The concentration in the hospital sector will go on and finally we will have five or six hospital groups for the whole country assuring acute and chronic care.

New discussions about the position of the hospital physicians: during the last months we had several discussions between the Hospitals and the Trade Union of Physicians (AMMD). While the AMMD continues to support the so-called liberal system, the Hospitals try to take account of this by introducing the concept of services, managed by senior hospital physicians, especially in the context of a better organization and a better interactivity with the other departments in the hospital, especially the nurses and administrators.

In the next weeks, discussions will go on to find a common solution and the common aim of hospitals and doctors will be to integrate more the medical part in the hospital management.

I will continue to inform you during next year, especially when I'm in the position to give you a common paper between hospitals and doctors.

Another important item was the common wish for more ambulatory surgery. Here the different partners will propose together with the Minister of Health a new concept in order to reduce the unnecessary hospitalizations and to liberate by these means acute beds for major pathologies.

Another topic on the agenda is the D.M.I. (Dossier Médical Informatisé) which will be introduced in most of the Hospitals during the next year.

To finish my report, I have to inform you that also in Luxembourg, the patient's security and the patient's rights discussion is becoming more and more overwhelming.

Pushed by the lobbyists of the patient's rights defenders, the Health Sector is more and more confronted with complaints and according to our law about patient's rights and duties we are elaborating together with the Minister of Health a mediation group which will be installed in each Hospital.

This is a very huge discussion among independent, liberal doctors and hospital managers.

Dr Raymond Lies
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