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ЕВРОПЕЙСКА АСОЦИАЦИЯ НА СТАРШИТЕ БОЛНИЧНИ ЛЕКАРИ**

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General Background

The Health Ministry proceeded with the restructuring of the Emergency Services already started in 2007.

The lack of reliable solutions for the closing of permanent emergency answering units in health centres raised a great wave of popular protest leading to the resignation of the Health Ministry, Mr. Correia de Campos, economist and his consequent replacement by a medical Paediatrician, Dr. Ana Jorge.

This new situation contributed to a more open dialog between medical doctors and the new Health Ministry in comparison to the previous one.

The Portuguese Medical Association hopes this new attitude to bring a merge of opinions in terms of fundamental issues for the National Health Service.

Medical careers

The main topic of discussion for the next times will be the medical careers. In result of the politics followed by the previous Health Ministry the medical career structure, the Continuous Medical Education support, suffered a vigorous attack.

Also the increase of Private Hospitals and the alteration of Public hospital into Company Public Entities highlighted this subject.

The Portuguese Medical Association intends to extend the medical careers structure to all sectors – private and public sectors, public sector with private management, companies in public sector – in cross section, in order to allow doctors to change from one institution to another keeping the same medical title or category.

Public – private partnerships

The current situation and some statements from the Government seems to indicate a setback in what public-private future partnerships is concerned.

An important indicator of this new positioning is the non-renewal of the contract with the hospital management entity considered the paradigm - private management in public sector – and by returning it to the state management and supervision.

Assiduity Biometric control

A much argued decision taken by the previous Health Ministry was the implementation of an assiduity biometric control which caused discomfort among the medical community by introducing a general atmosphere of distrust.

Elections in Portuguese Medical Association

Elections within the Portuguese Medical Association have taken place in 2007 and which resulted in the re-election of Dr. Pedro Nunes for President and of the remaining national and regional bodies.