



**Kosovo Medical Chamber**

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## **Violence against physicians**

Violence against physician in Kosovo is the most difficult situations that physicians face by their patients or their relatives.

All health care workers are at risk and physicians are no exception.

Among doctors that where attacked physically were Psychiatrist, emergency medicine physicians and general practitioner.

No one was killed but they had physical injuries.

During the period of 2008 -2017 since Kosovo is independent country there were 4 psychiatrist were attack physically and injured, 5 emergency doctors and one general practitioner, many more are threatened or exposed to verbal aggression.

Most violence is perpetrated by patients and visitors.

Attack from psychiatric patients happened in their delusional state, suddenly so it was no time for physicians to avoid their attack or to defend themselves.

In Kosovo health care system is mixed type i.e. both the public and private Medicare system runs parallel and side by side.

In public health care system governed by the state or Ministry of Health is almost at free of cost.

Private sector is regulated by law but it is big profitable industry.

Attacks from the other patients involve many systemic issues, including inadequate health budgets that lead to compromised health infrastructure, rising cost of healthcare and no health insurance which erase economic burden on populations which is poorest in Europe.

In Kosovo is growing misperception and misunderstanding in the community that doctors are unnecessarily admitting and treating patients for economic reasons, referring patients from public health care system to private clinics, creating divide of mistrust.

Big health bills and misperceptions like this became triggers for violence against doctors.

Last year newspapers and electronic media play a negative role in fact a real war against doctors, putting up negative reports about doctors, portraying them as the villain.

Very often they don't present the facts while quoting the patients version of the incident and the physician are not given one but important fundamental right of self-defense.

One group of doctors spoke with owner of one very important newspaper in Kosovo and ask him to change his attitude toward doctors but his answer was: "who is going to by a newspaper

that publishes reports about doctors saving lives and helping patients.

It won't make any sell, the bad news sell the newspapers. You mind your business and I will mine "was his answer.

Doctors that experience violence or are threatened except pain experience anger, fear, anxiety, self-blame and loss of confidence and as a result they miss from the job and need psychological counseling.

Being threatened or harmed while providing care is hard to reconcile for physician who strives to bring compassion and respect to the patients.

It doesn't exist the Law that will specifically defend physicians against physical or verbal attacks. In the Law on the right and responsibilities of the citizens in the health care, article 22 says:

In a course of exercising the citizen or his relatives should not violate the rights of the health care workers stipulated in law.

Criminal Code of Kosovo has article against violence against workers in their workplace.

This laws and many other in health system in Kosovo are not implemented and I don't know if anybody is punished for attacking doctor physically or verbally.

Doctor's chamber after every physical or verbal attack protested in media and organizing protest and strikes.

## **Specialization**

In Kosovo are regulated by administrative instruction issued by Ministry of Health and the last from three to five years differs from field of specialty.

Mostly they are sponsored by Ministry of Health but they can achieved by voluntary self-payment.

Sub specialization vary from 6 months to one year.

There are not regulations for medical doctors to achieve and practice independently certain competences which are not included within their belonging specialty curriculum.

## **Licensing and CME**

CME in Kosovo is regulated by the administrative instruction issued last year by the Ministry of Health, which is basic document for licensing and relicensing doctors.

Doctors needs to achieve 100 points in 5 year to be relicensed

Until now nobody wasn't responsible for CME events because until last year we dint have relicensing at all.

Every five years Minister of the Health release a written decision for relicensing for other five years of Doctors.

Relicensing was made in a hurry from Ministry of Health since according to law, Medical chamber had to take responsibilities for licensing and relicensing.

We don't have any information if is any EU project for recognition of doctor's licenses for the Balkan countries.

## **Treatment protocols**

Discussion of treatment protocols doesn't affect work of medical chambers and this is not an issue in our country.

Each Medical or Health institution in Kosovo have protocol treatments and they are made by combinations of work of professional's bodies.

They use a systematic multidisciplinary approach to prepare evidence based guidelines and are adapted from existing top-level guidelines from worldwide academic medical associations

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Last year Ministry of Health of Kosovo arrange working groups with experts from different field of medicine to design a certain number of protocols , but so far there was no outcome from this

All the current protocols are updated based on changes that affect currents science.

Society of Cardiologist updated their protocols on June 2016 and these changes were approved by society European Society of Cardiology.