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### The Polish Association of Hospital Directors

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The association is a non-governmental organisation gathering directors of hospitals and other institutions in healthcare. The organisation is funded through membership fees, extra-budgetary centres and donations. An exchange of experiences and information is one of main tasks of the association in order to provide modern and effective functioning and management of healthcare in Poland. The PAHD achieves its goals through the organisation of domestic and international conferences, consulting and initiating legal documents and the cooperation with related associations in other countries and with international organisations.

On the recommendation of their German friends, the Polish association was admitted into European Association of Hospital Managers (EAHM) during the 1994 EAHM congress. Mieczysław Pasowicz, the founder and president of PAHD was made a member of the Executive Committee.

#### Activities: Past and Present

From the beginning, PAHD has been involved in current healthcare issues. In 1995 an international conference in Czystochowa was organised. Its topic was "Autonomy and financing hospitals in Central Europe". National conferences of the association are regularly organised as part of the activities stipulated in the articles of association. First meetings had a local and regional character and concerned matters such as the status of the hospital administrator, innovations in Polish hospitals and IT.

The association organises numerous events, aimed at national and international audiences. The largest international meeting, the 19th EAHM congress held in 2002, was hosted by the city Krakow. The meeting was held under the honorary patronage of Aleksander Kwasniewski, the President of the Republic of Poland. The theme was "Patient focused care: from structural reforms to integrated care."

More recent activities include an international scientific conference organised by PADH in October 2011. The conference focused on "Medical dilemmas of the 21st century" and was held in Krakow. It was connected with the problem of our ageing society and potential of new medical technologies to overcome the challenges of the future. In moderated panel debates with representatives from politics, public health, medicine and social science attendees discussed health challenges of the future, the significance of public health and the use of new technologies to overcome problems connected with demographic, epidemiological, and socioeconomic transformations.

The association was also one of the consultants on social drafts of regulations of the Department of Health. PAHD consulted on issues such as the scope of activities of the doctor, nurse and the midwife in primary healthcare; the amendment to regulation on spa treatment; state aid and restructuring of public healthcare centres.

#### The Future of the Association

The PAHD was formed 18 years ago in a completely different political and economic situation. Back then the focus was on educating managers on the changing healthcare system and the preparation for necessary reforms. Today health policy in Poland still requires modification but the level of the professional awareness is higher and in general better at coping with the changing situation in healthcare. Failures of reforms are caused mainly by lack of funding and legal inconsistencies.

The restructuring of hospitals is the next important issue. During the transformation period the number hospital beds was reduced and as a consequence, so was the number of public hospitals in Poland. On the one hand, it is an advantageous tendency as only the strongest and best institutions will remain. On the other hand, such a situation is giving rise to problems of another kind; social issues such as the emigration of doctors and nurses and the general complaint of poor/reduced access to medical services.

On that account the association will propose new organisational and technical solutions in the area of hospital and medical services, considering factors such as the ageing of the population, need for the reduction of hospital debt, implementing additional sources of financing in healthcare, coordination of care, effectiveness of hospitals etc. PAHD will also focus on strengthening the national network of hospitals and public-private sector cooperation. A development programme for e-health services and all-Polish information system is another key activity.

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