

Decalogue of the wise Minister of Health

- I. First: Regardless of a worldview, political opinion or party affiliation, everyone will one day suffer from health problems. Disease, pain, suffering and death are unavoidable aspects of human nature. A wise minister of health should aim at creation of such circumstances, in which not only all people have equal chances for optimal solution of their health problems, but also equal chance not to die, no matter how they die.
- II. Second: Although life and health are values, they are not the only values a politician should protect. Neither are they the highest values. The conflict of health and life with other values is inevitable and a wise politician should be aware of the necessity of compromises. Each compromise requires renunciation and each compromise has its limits.
- III. Third: Life and health are costly. Our health needs grow faster than our means to fulfill them. Therefore, each citizen should know exactly, to what they are entitled within basic coverage, and to what degree their health is their own responsibility.
- IV. Fourth: Remember that aims of the health care system should not be confused with means used to achieve them. The more time you spend to determine the aims and get social approval for them, the easier you will get approval for the planned means.
- V. Fifth: Remember that consequences of a mistake in health policy are far greater than those of a mistake made in an individual case. The health policy is a long-term issue and must take into account welfare of more than one generation.
- VI. Sixth: Your primary aim is to achieve jointly negotiated and unequivocally defined aims of the health care system. Each decision you make should be rational and free from emotions or temporary political pressure and interests.

- VII. Seventh: Your decisions are usually associated with uncertainty. Therefore, make sure that your decisions are based on scientific evidence and that you are assisted only by reliable, competent and independent experts. Citizens have right to know, who namely is responsible for a specific project, analysis, proposal of change or decision. Remember that rational justification of decisions you make is your moral duty.
- VIII. Eighth: Reserve enough time for thinking and assure resources for studio research, including feasibility studies as well as planning and analysis of possible scenarios. Emotional decisions, made *ad hoc*, under political pressure produce negative effects, as a rule.
- IX. Ninth: Remember that you act under pressure of various groups of interests, some of them very powerful and influential. You have been made a guardian of the common good. Therefore, making any decision concerning allocation of public financial resources, by necessity limited, always take into consideration alternative costs of your decision.
- X. Tenth: Competence is a moral duty of each politician. However, in your case this duty is of extreme importance, as the life, health and welfare of each citizen is at a stake.

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