

General Practice

November 2006

By [Bohumil Seifert](#), M.D., Ph.D. and Petr Struk, M.D., Mgr.

General practice is recognised as a speciality with own postgraduate curriculum since 1978 in the Czech Republic. Currently 5100 general practitioners are working independently as privat providers in primary care and are fully qualified in general practice. An average number of patients registered with one GP is 1600. The reimbursement of GPs is mixed capitation and fee for service payment. Primary care is provided in outpatients clinics with groups of doctors or more often by individual GPs. The concept of family medicine does not exist and children up to 15 or 19 are registered with practising pediatricians. GPs don't play the strict gate-keeping role but the most of patients seek for health care first in general practice.

Education

General practice is a part of curriculum in all seven medical schools, but not all faculties have established GP chair.

60-months postgraduate programme was established by new law in 2004. It is structured to a hospital part (internal medicine, surgery, gynaecology, psychiatry) and ambulant part with a dominant training in general practice. The management of postgraduate training, obligative and facultative courses, regular meetings for trainees and methodological support of GP-trainers is provided by Department of General Practice of Postgraduate Medical School. Currently all teaching practices have to pass through a process of accreditation.

The *continuous medical education* is supervised by Medical Chamber via a credit system. The dominant role in CME has The Society of General Practice. The offer of educational events of different character is rich, including regional CME, national conferences and special educational programmes on leading actual topics (colorectal cancer screening, cardiovascular prevention, pain management, paliative care, etc). The attendance of annual GP conference in November 2006 exceeded 1000 of participants. New practical guidelines were presented and new moduls such as original EQuIP workshop on Uncertainty were succesfully performed. Another source of information are peer reviewed journals and internet. A project of EUNI (e-university) has been recently launched. Project EUNI including e-lecture prepared by general practitioner on *Proteins of acute phase* was presented during EURACT meeting in October in Prague.

Quality initiatives

Czech Ministry of Health established „Committee for Quality in Health Care“ in 2000. The purpose

of this committee is to prepare system of quality management closely related to the European health care quality management activities and the relevant programmes of WHO/EURO, putting the main accent to the comparison of key indicators, parameters and evaluations. The committee initiated proposals of four general programmes:

- Health Care Quality Programme Policy
- Measurement of Care Efficiency and Introducing of Standard and Special Clinical Classifications
- Standardization of Health Care Delivery
- Quality and Availability of Health Care – roles of the state and regions

The committee settled frame to create global policies for programmes of quality and efficiency of health care delivery programmes. First project following these programmes were prepared and accepted in 30th October 2000 and subsequently submitted to the Governmental Committee for Quality and confirmed. Originally, quality management activities were initiated by Czech Medical Chamber in the beginning of 90's in the Czech Republic. The first projects was almost completely focused on the hospital care and partly to the clinical laboratory services. General practice and primary health care were slightly delayed in the QM process. However, there were many various projects supporting the field of general practice from the middle of 90's (further information follows) and, at the present, the process of accreditation of general practices is to be tested and introduced.

Since autumn 2001 The Czech Society of General Practice (scientific) and The Association of Czech General Practitioners (professional) have established a Centre of Primary Care in Prague. It was followed by developing of regional primary care centres as a an alternative to previous administrative management and in order to coordinate activities in education, research and in quality initiatives. All Society members were offered to enter the e-network.

In 2002 *Primary Care Research Fund* was founded to support research and quality improvement projects in primary care and to enable independence in education, quality and research projects. Practical guidelines development project is supported via this Fund. The Society of General Practice has recieved several grants since 2001:

Harmonizing tools for research and quality improvement. This project consisted of :

- ICPC-2 translation procedure
- ICPC-2 study on referrals from general practice
- Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire (EUROPEP) translation procedure
- EUROPEP study in 20 practices
- International Glossary of Primary Care – translation

Establishment of Centre for Guidelines Development and Implementation

In a period 2003-2006 thirty five practical guidelines for general practitioners were prepared by specialists and practitioners under the umbrella of Czech Society of General Practice. CME programmes were organized as a part of guidelines implementation process.

Informed Selfcare as a tool for process of standardization in health care.

The aim of this project was to explain the EBM guidelines to patients and prepare written and internet information for patients.

There are other particular **quality and research projects** have been conducted in general practice:

- *Monitoring of Colorectal Cancer Screening*
- *Study on cardiovascular prevention in general practice*
- *Screening of depression in primary care*
- *Reflux disease management in primary care*
- *Audit of antibiotic therapy in general practice*
- *Audit on chronic pain management and opioid treatment.*

The first comprehensive *Textbook on General Practice* was published in 2005. It includes a chapter devoted to quality issues.

The Czech Society of General Practice organized *The International Symposium of General Practice/Family Medicine* as an invitational conference for leading colleagues in 11 countries of Central and East Europe. The conference was held in Prague in March 2006. Topics concerning quality and continuing professional development were also discussed. A comprehensive report from the meeting is being prepared.

A closed EQuip meeting will take place in Prague in April 2007.