

Romania

Update from Sanitas Health Federation

On March 17, the meeting of the Tripartite National Council took place where Sanitas raised the most important problems pointed out by union members in the health system:

I. General lack of protective materials for medical and auxiliary personnel (masks, disinfectant solutions, suits, even soap).

The government responded that equipment will be imported within the week, including: over 1 million masks, 40,000 suits, pulmonary ventilation devices, etc. Solutions were also sought from domestic producers. Supplies would be distributed rationally from the central level.

II. The need to develop clear, unitary procedures for the application of Emergency Ordinance of Government no. 11/2020, to be transmitted to all health units and especially brought to the notice of all employees who are or are to be involved in stopping the pandemic, in the sense of a rigorous organization of staff from all health units.

The government said that in compliance with the provisions of Emergency Ordinance of Government (Ordonanta de Urgenta al Guvernului) 11/2020 and of the Decree for establishing the state of emergency, employments will be made and the rigorous distribution of staff will be considered, ensuring the payment of the salary rights according to the law.

III. Preparation of work schedules as the staff actually performs their activity, where they are already involved in the fight with the new virus (eg: on the timetable there are 8 hours, in fact they work much more. a lot).

IV. Personnel management so that we do not get to the top of the crisis with all the overworked staff and possibly a large percentage of contamination, possibly in isolation / quarantine.

The government said that any modification / measure regarding the employment relations (leave of any kind, work schedule, posting of staff) will be made with the consultation of the social partners.

V. Priority testing of suspected medical staff and cases that have occurred among patients already admitted to hospitals, so as to expose the medical staff as little as possible.

The government said that testing of medical staff will become a priority.

VI. The lack of clear protocols / procedures at national level to be made known to all the institutions involved and the training of medical and care staff in this regard.

VII. Elaboration of a circular / recommendations by CNAS (Casa Nationala de Asigurarii de Sanatate – National Health Insurance House) detailing the provisions of the Decree regarding the establishment of the state of emergency in the territory of Romania.

VIII. Application of the measures provided by Law 19/2020 (granting parents free days for the supervision of children up to 12 years in the situation of closing the educational units) for the personnel in the health system, in case we have single parent families or both parents work in areas that do not allow granting this facility.

The government said that this request would be discussed at the government meeting on March 18.

The representative of the SANITAS Federation received assurances that all the problems reported will be discussed during the Government meeting and at the level of all the authorized institutions, and the best solutions to solve them will be found.

The consultations with the social partners will be held weekly or whenever necessary.

The union called on managers of the health units to consult with the representatives of the Ministry of Health in relation to any problem arising at the unit level.

State of emergency legislation

The most important provisions of the Decree regarding the establishment of a state of emergency, regarding the field of health:

1. In the sanitary units and the social assistance services, contract staff can be hired without competition, for a fixed period of 6 months.
2. Extension of the applicability of normative acts, valid until March 31, 2020, regarding the provision of medical services and medicines within the social health insurance system, national health programs - preventive and curative, which means, most likely, existing contracts between CNAS (National Health Insurance House) and the sanitary units will remain valid after March 31, 2020.
3. The medical services for the treatment of COVID-19 cases and their complications are provided to all persons in Romania and are supported by the FNUASS budget.
4. The medical services and the medicines can be granted and validated without signing with the national card of social health insurance and without reporting period within 3 working days from the date of the provision of the services.
5. Settlement for the health units with beds in contractual relationship with the health insurance houses of the amounts contracted and settled from the budget of the single national health insurance fund or the budget of the Ministry of Health, regardless of the number of cases performed or, as the case may be, the level of activity actually performed under the conditions in which it exceeds the contracted level.
6. During the state of emergency, for the non-fulfillment of the duties of the service, the heads of the health units, the public health departments, the health insurance houses, the ambulance services, as well as the central and local public authorities and institutions may be suspended with responsibilities in the field of social assistance and protection, regardless of their status. It is not necessary for the appointed persons to exercise these functions temporarily as civil servants.
7. The financial influences determined by the salary increases for the medical and non-medical personnel in the public health units and those whose sole administrative-territorial units are supported by the budget of the National Health Insurance Fund - Title VI - Transfers between units of the public administration .
8. For medical services, medicines, para-clinical investigations granted during the period of emergency, the amounts committed will not be limited to those approved for the first quarter of 2020.
9. The structural changes within the health units will be notified by the local public health departments according to their needs.

10. The provision of the necessary amounts in the budget of the Ministry of Health for the acquisition by the public health departments and sanitary units of materials needed during the pandemic period is carried out by transfers from the Ministry of Health, following which the acquisition will be made by them.

11. Ministries with their own health system can make direct purchases for their own health units from both the budgets of the line ministries and those of the health units.

12. During the state of emergency, the provisions of Law no. 19/2020 regarding the granting of free days to parents for the supervision of children, in the situation of temporary closure of the educational units, does not apply to the employees in the public health units. Personnel from public sanitary units who cannot benefit from free days granted in accordance with Law 19/2020, will benefit from an increase of the salary amount of 75% of the salary corresponding to a working day but not more than the correspondent per day of 75% of the gain gross average salary, in case the other parent does not benefit from the rights regulated in the Law.

13. By exception from the provisions of the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 111/2010 regarding the leave and the monthly allowance for the raising of children, the entitled person retains the incentive of insertion in the situation of job loss due to the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Update from SNLP

Gradual measures have been taken by the authorities to cure and prevent the spread of the Virus.

- The schools and kindergartens were closed starting with 11.03.2020 and measures to limit the group activities have been taken.
- People were advice to limit the social interaction, but no strict measures were imposed.
- From 16.03.2020 a new set of measures have been imposed. The president declared state of emergency for the next 30 days with specific provisions for public order, economy, health, labour and social protection, justice, external affairs.
- Some banks decided to extend the period of credit for their clients
- The transport companies reduced the number of public transport vehicles.

There were reported a lot of labour contract termination and significant employers decided to shut down (for ex auto industry: Ford factory and Dacia factory). Shops and restaurants are closed since 17.03.2020 – they can continue to work if they can deliver their goods.

On 17.03.2020 The Tripartite Council for Social Dialogue (the higher social dialog institution in Romania) was gathered. The BNS trade union confederation made proposals to the Government to support the employees and employers and also urge the necessity of a good and strong process of communication between employers and trade unions.

Prison service

Until today, there are no cases of COVID 19 among prisoners (around 20.700) or staff (around 12.500). We have permanent communication between management and trade union and several measures have been set up:

- Visits from relatives and friends are cancelled, as well as conjugal visits;
- The number and the duration of phone calls was raised;
- All exits from the penitentiary, as a benefit for inmates, are postponed;

- Transferring inmates between detention places is made only in special cases;
- All inmate work outside of penitentiaries is cancelled;
- Personnel that works directly with inmates is equipped with protection equipment;
- Group activities were restricted;
- Contact between penitentiary staff and inmates is limited;
- Temporary restricting freedom of movement for inmates classified in open and semi-open regime, meaning that the cell doors are closed;
- Distribution of flyers with information;
- Posting information in different spaces;
- Transmitting periodically information about SARS-CoV-2 through the detention places own radio and television circuits;
- Q&A sessions with medical staff and inmates;
- Frequent sanitation activities of the detention spaces and the spaces designed for activities;
- Individual counselling activities (educational, social, psychological) in order to raise awareness, to accept strict hygiene measures, and to limit the spread of the virus.

Incidents

In one semi-open and open regime prison, a group of inmates protested against the restriction decisions: they barricaded the door of the cell and set fire to their mattresses after the night counting. The intervention of the prison guards was prompt but as a result of the violent fire 3 inmates died and 2 were severely injured out of 10 inmates present in the cell.