



## Association of Ambulatory Specialists of Czech Republic

Successor: Guild of Insurance Physicians, founded December 1906  
Member E.A.N.A. - Europäische Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Niedergelassenen Ärzte  
registration VSC/1-7553/91-R

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**Abbrev.: SAS CR = Assoc. of Ambulatory Specialists in Czech Republic**

Dear colleagues,

at last EANA meeting in Madrid 2015 I reported completed reconstruction of EANA web pages. I also asked all members to contribute to the content of the pages and begin to disperse information fog around EANA. Unfortunately, any of my six points in the report have not found an echo. During last twelve months, except for the information of Dr. Bolliger, nothing came. The hit counter on the Web site clearly shows the interest intensity on exchange of information about the only pan European organization for contract doctors and about the operation of an independent medical practice in different Member states. It is possible to ask whether actually it is not a silent poll on EANA existence. The loss of the members is then sad, but inevitable result.

In the header is EANA identified as a working group of contract doctors, but it is difficult to explain to someone how it works and what the goals are. Unfortunately, EANA is between doctors in Europe nearly unknown, how you can easily learn from testing "ordinary" colleagues of different specialties across Austria, Slovakia, Germany, France, Poland, or Switzerland. Almost 2000 members of SAS CR are informed about the existence of EANA, because they have been regularly informed by the Board of SAS CR and on our web site. But this is a mere passive transfer of information from EANA meetings, which is not sufficient, but more current information is not available. The activity of EANA is not attractive enough for the remaining approximately 24 thousand contract doctors in the Czech Republic. We failed to awake the interest of general practitioners, lab specialists, or to maintain the interest of private gynecologists, who after a short experience of cooperation with EANA have withdrawn, because nothing spoke in favor of the membership.

What future can EANA have? The loss of the Member countries in last years doesn't offer much optimism. EANA role should be in the spreading the information on the existence, status and problems of contract doctors in Europe, exchange of their experience. The knowledge of solutions in other countries are not always transferable but it may offer a hint how to handle problems. In many countries an increased pressure from state authorities is felt on the independent non-governmental health care providers. In the Czech Republic we feel the pressure to restrict the ability of providers to negotiate directly with health insurance companies about reimbursement and about contract



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conditions (as defined by law from 1990's). Thoughts to reduce of the number of health insurance companies, main source for our income, can be also registered. The political leadership of the Czech

Republic in the last ten years considers contract physician to be the "thorn in the system". The leading state health care policy returns to the socialistic ideal of a state-run hospital with policlinic (the word "socialistic" is understood differently in the countries that had own experience with socialism). The result is then the preference for allocating funds toward the state hospitals (now more than 54% of the overall health budget). The arrival and progression of large health-care chains controlled by financial groups lead to the disappearance of small medical offices, of outpatient specialists, pharmacies and engulfing of the labs by giant multidisciplinary companies. This trend not unique for Czech Republic only, but unfortunately it doesn't excite anyone and anywhere. Again we have been describing this negative trend repeatedly, but without result.

The decision to establish a pan European organization for contract doctors was excellent step and it would be pity if the idea will pass away. We feel that the necessary condition for survival of EANA is to arouse the interest of members to share information about their status, working conditions and existential problems, plans and goals. Formal country reports once per year are not enough. Last but not least is the importance of "spreading the word" about EANA existence.

I'm empowered by the Board of the Ambulatory Specialists of Czech Republic to proclaim that SAS CR considers this presentation essential and that only evident change in EANA activity can justify the continuation of our membership in this organization.

Praha, 09.04.2016

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