



HEALTH INSURANCE  
FUND OF MACEDONIA  
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Date: 20 January 2017

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Increased consumption and availability of medications

### Annual report on medications for 2016

The availability of high quality medications for all insured persons in Macedonia presents continuous effort of the Health Insurance Fund of Macedonia which, in 2016, ensured bigger availability of medications, facilitation of the manner of obtaining medications at the expense of the Fund for all insured persons. In 2016, the number of medications at the expense of the Fund reached 1210 medications under their brand name from various manufacturers i.e. 427 generics with pharmaceutical dosage form and strength, of which **75% are medications for which the insured persons should not pay any additional funds, besides the participation in accordance with the legal regulations.**



The insured persons can take these medications with prescription from their primary care physician, while some of them require recommendation from specialist/subspecialist. In 2016, the insured persons were able to take the medications in 776 pharmacies on the entire territory of Republic of Macedonia, of which 695 are pharmacies, 72 pharmaceutical stations, 6 mobile pharmacies and 3 rural pharmacies. For such purpose, the budget intended for medications in 2016 was increased to 2.55 billion MKD, compared to 2015 when the budget was 2.46 billion MKD, whereby the budget for 2017 is increased for additional 200 million MKD.

The increased number of pharmacies with which the Fund has concluded contract and the budget intended for medications, the positive effects from the measures implemented by the Fund and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in the past years for the purpose of ensuring enough quantities of medications for the needs of the insured persons, are confirmed with the latest received



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data on the increased consumption of prescription medications at the expense of the Fund in the pharmacies in 2016.



Compared to 2009, the year when the medication reference system was introduced for the purpose of provisioning medications at the choice of the insured persons when only 20% of these medications were without additional payment, in 2016 we have almost four times higher number of prescription medications at the choice of the insured persons without any additional payment or approximately 75% of the total number of medications, which shows that the Fund succeeded to ensure saving of the personal funds of the insured persons.

The good supply of medications by the insured persons of the Fund with prescription medications from the primary positive medication list is affected by many factors, such as better placement of the pharmacies in rural areas, distribution of the financial limits so-called pharmacy quota, ensuring issuance of so-called expensive medications beyond the quota, introduction of comparative methodology for determining the reference prices of the medications from the positive list, thus reducing many prices of the medications, the prescription habits of the physicians and the structure and the needs of the population as well.

The consumption of prescription medications at the expense of the Fund through the pharmacies continuously grows in the past years. **As a comparison, if in 2002 1.2 billion MKD were intended for 8 million prescriptions, in 2008 1.3 billion MKD were intended for 10 million prescriptions, and as of 01.09.2016 HIFM increased the budget for medications to 2.55 billion MKD which is double funds for prescription medications at the expense of the Fund. The number of realized prescriptions in 2016 was 22,274,288.**

The increased consumption of prescription medications at the expense of the Fund keeps the pace with the world trend for increased medication use/consumption, which in the period from 2008



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until today can be seen from the increased quantities of provisioned medications for the insured persons and approximately two times bigger funds intended for prescription medications at the expense of HIFM. In the period 2008-2016, the number of medication quantities/prescription is increased more than two times, as well as the amount of the prescription medications at the expense of HIFM.

**The difference between the current situation with the one 10 years ago is huge since now there are no queues in the pharmacies, no lack of medications and the insured persons do not pay the medications at two times higher prices.**

*Table 1. Display of the number of realized prescription and total amounts (MKD) for the period 2008 - 2016*

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of realized prescriptions in the pharmacies	10,288,509	14,965,727	15,277,792	16,332,551	17,485,146	17,822,132	19,385,458	21,129,626	22,274,288
Total invoiced amount from the pharmacies (billion MKD)	1.319	1.829	1.778	1.902	1.993	2.124	2.263	2.425	2.626

*Note: In 2009 medication reference system was implemented ensuring possibility for selection of prescription medication from the positive medication list in the pharmacies, and in 2010 new reference prices for medications from the positive list were implemented, determined according to the newly introduced comparative methodology of the Fund according to which large number of medications became cheaper*

The trend of growth of the medication consumption continues in 2016 as well. The number of realized prescriptions in this period is 22,274,288 which is 5.4% more compared to 2015, while the entire invoiced amount for medications at the expense of HIFM is increased for approximately 8.2% and in 2016 it amounts 2,626,120,318 MKD.

**In 2016, 1.23 million or 66.4% of the total number of insured persons have taken prescription medications.**

- Out of total 14 medication groups, the most consumed medications are the ones from the group of cardiovascular system medications, with 9,667 million prescriptions. In 2016, the



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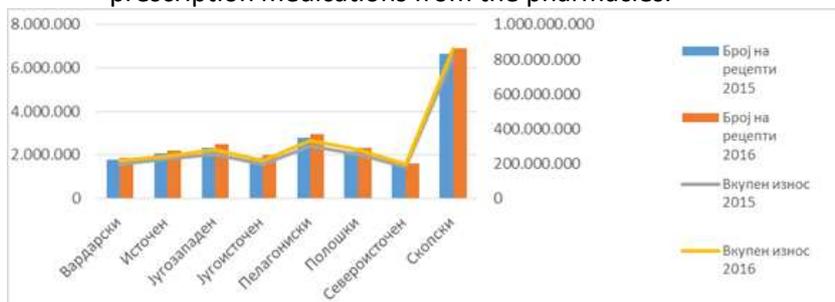
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consumption of this medication group marks 4.8% growth compared to 2015 and the financial funds are 6.7% bigger compared to 2015, i.e. 717.98 million MKD were spent in 2016. Out of this medication group, 464,887 insured persons of the Fund have taken ATC group C prescription medications from the pharmacies.

- Respiratory system medications are the second most consumed medications according to the total amounts, with 400.96 million MKD spent for 1.08 million prescriptions which is 4.9% more prescriptions compared to 2015, an increase of 11.7% compared to 2015. Out of this medication group, 278,068 insured persons of the Fund have taken ATC group R prescription medications from the pharmacies.
- Nervous system medications are the third most consumed medication group in 2016 according to the total amount with 3.37 million prescriptions which is 3.72% more compared to 2015, while the financial funds are 8.9% higher compared to 2015 i.e. 397.6 million MKD in 2016. Out of this medication group, 413,548 insured persons of the Fund have taken ATC group N prescription medications from the pharmacies.



In 2016, the medication consumption per regions shows that the consumption is increased in all regions. The consumption is the largest in the Skopje region, and the smallest consumption is in the north eastern region.

The consumption per number of realized prescriptions is largest in the Skopje region, with total realized 6,920,473 prescriptions (approximately 31.06%). The prescription medication consumption per total amounts is once again largest in the Regional Office Skopje with 861,107,753 MKD total (approximately 32.8%). The Pelagonija region is the second with 2,944 million prescriptions for which 331.5 million MKD were paid and the south western region is the third one with 2,475 million realized prescriptions for which 279.9 million MKD were paid.

For the first ten most consumed medications per generics and per amounts, in 2016 the Fund separated 904.2 million MKD or 34.4% of the total funds for drugs, while for the ten most consumed prescription



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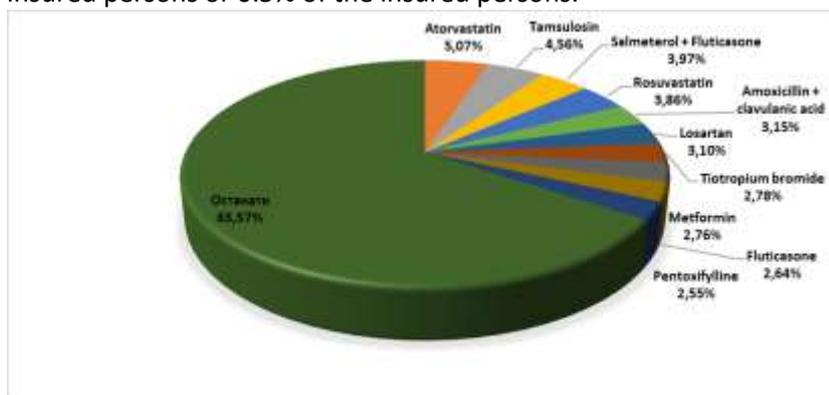
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medication 9.32 million prescriptions or approximately 42% of the total number of realized prescriptions were realized.

The **first three** most consumed **medications per amounts** are the generics:

- Atorvastatin - medication for reducing the level of bad cholesterol in the blood, taken with medical prescription at the expense of HIFM by 109,309 insured persons which is 5.9% of the total average number of insured persons;
- Tamsulosin - prostate medication, taken with medical prescription in the pharmacy by 42,558 insured persons or 2.3% of the total average number of insured persons;
- Salmeterol + fluticasone - respiratory system medication, for treatment of asthma and COPD for 9,513 insured persons or 0.5% of the insured persons.



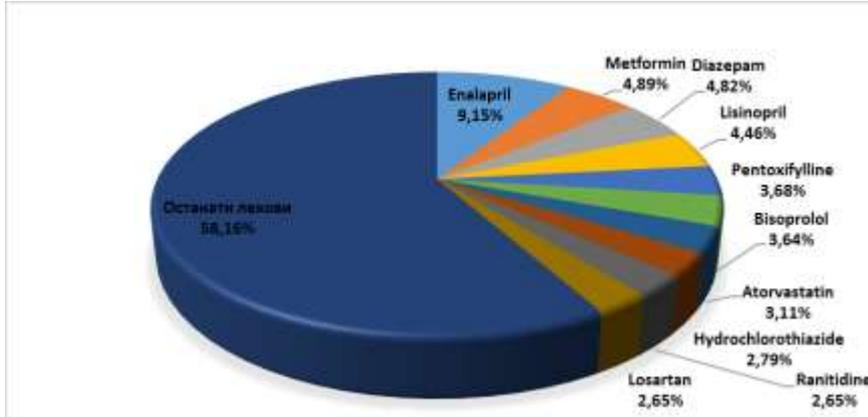
**According to the number of realized prescriptions, the first three most consumed generics are as follows:**

- Enalapril - medication used to treat high blood pressure, taken by 176,321 insured persons or 9.5% of the insured persons of HIFM;
- Metformin - medication for treatment of diabetes, for 91,471 insured persons or 4.9% insured persons; and
- Diazepam - medication for the nervous system, for 216,024 insured persons, which is 11.7% of the total average number of insured persons of the Fund.



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The Fund always considers the insured persons as a priority and we create our policies in order to ensure satisfied insured persons and high quality health services.