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PRESS CONFERENCE

New software of the HIFM for advancing the administrative processes with healthcare institutions

One of the strategic objectives of the Health Insurance Fund is to implement a system for electronic operations, introduce new electronic services, and to completely remove papers from the daily operations. HIFM has signed cooperation agreements with 3231 legal entities, public and private healthcare institutions in the Republic of Macedonia.

Today, we would like to inform you about the novelties in the Fund's electronic system, which will advance and facilitate the administrative work in the healthcare institutions in R. of Macedonia, and will certainly allow more time dedicated to our insureds.

In the past period, we have worked on an electronic system that will result in replacing the current conventional administration operations of the healthcare facilities with the Fund, and full transfer to electronic operations.

We would like to inform you that the new electronic software will completely remove the need for paper in the administrative procedures with the healthcare institutions.

From now on, the managers of healthcare institutions or the persons designated by them will be able to conduct numerous administrative procedures with an electronic signature, and directly from their offices, for which it was previously necessary to visit the Fund and use paper.

All requests, notifications, and delivery of documents required, will be carried out by the healthcare institutions without having them to leave their offices. This facility is particularly important for the private healthcare institutions located outside Skopje, which will no longer have to spend on post fees or travel to Skopje for the purpose of informing the Fund on the changes in their institution. There are savings in time, money, and human resources.

HIFM has entered into agreements with 3231 healthcare institutions - legal entities, as follows: 1086 primary healthcare physicians, 971 primary healthcare dentists, 455 pharmacies, 177 specialist dentistry institutions, 144 specialist medical institutions, 128 primary care gynaecologist, 102 laboratories, 113 public healthcare institutions, and others. If organisational units, i.e. teams of physicians, are taken into account, the Fund has entered into more than 4.000 agreements.

All these healthcare institutions have, in 9 months, between January 1st and September 30th, made 3250 contract amendments for administrative purposes. This means that, on average, there are 361 contract amendments on monthly basis.

There are 21 types of contract annexes and notifications envisaged for the signed agreements, referring to the following:

- change in staff, medical nurse or hiring a new physician instead of the existing one due to long-term absence,



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- **Statutory amendments of the head offices of a healthcare institution,**
- **application for replacement of a selected physician,**
- **notices for short sick leave, notices for lost stolen facsimile/request for issuance of a new facsimile (stamp without which the physician may not work),**
- **notices for physicians work in rural areas and have shift duties in the towns in Macedonia, change of facsimiles due to new title and education,**
- **Transfer of staff from one organisational unit to another, and the like.**

From now on, the authorized persons of healthcare institutions need not visit the Fund's central office with papers, since they may conduct the same activities by electronic means via the Fund's web portal, from their office.

Explained in simple terms, healthcare institution needing to notify about a specific amendment/annex, may do so via its authorized person by accessing the Fund's web portal, attach all of the required documents, digitally sign them, and immediately have said application or notice delivered to the Fund.

Healthcare institutions will have a status overview on the processing of their application.

Upon processing the application, the Fund allows to sign the application as a hardcopy or via digital signature. In case hardcopy is selected, the manner of processing the application will be the same as the one currently implemented in the system. If the healthcare institution selects to use a digital signature, the Fund will send a notification that it is awaiting a signature by the healthcare institution, and as soon as it is digitally signed by all authorized persons, it is returned to the Fund for processing.

The advantage of the new application or notice delivery method, as per the signed agreements with healthcare institutions, is that instead of having to wait for several days for the documents (either documents requested from the HI or documents from the Fund for the HI for signature) to go forth and back between the healthcare institution and the Fund, this will occur electronically and in real time. Often healthcare institutions, while waiting for these documents to reach their final destination, are prevented from performing their daily activities, that is to say, providing healthcare to their patients (unable to issue prescriptions, referrals, etc.).

The benefits of electronic mode of operation will be enjoyed by all healthcare institutions due to savings in time, human resources and financial costs. An additional benefit is that at any time they may check the status of their application. Hence we believe that no longer having to travel to Skopje or send registered mail will be a huge benefit for each institution.

The Fund will also have benefits by saving time, by having access to all documentation via electronic means, and by not needing to keep bulky files for each institution individually. Errors are also eliminated, and internally we will have a real insight in the applications submitted to the Fund, and in the manner and speed of their resolution.

After this novelty, a six-month adjustment period is envisaged for the healthcare institutions regarding the mode of operations, and during this period it will be allowed to use electronic means and hardcopy, and after these six months, or from May 1st, 2016, the changes will be carried out only via electronic means.



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For the Fund insureds come first, so our policies are created for the purpose of having satisfied insureds, and quality health services. Hence, we must convey the same rule to our contracting parties as well.