**22/12/2015**

**Reply of Lithuania on preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age as a human rights concern- Human Rights Council Resolution 27/14**

Lithuania is pleased to provide the following information on the application of the Technical Guidance aimed at eliminating preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age.

In 2015 from the fund of Lithuanian – Swiss project of cooperation program, 70 scientific evidence-based obstetric and neonatal diagnostic and treatment guidelines were prepared. The options of diagnostics and treatment in the developed guidelines are differentiated according to the level of services in the hospital.

By the order of the Minister of Health No. V-383, of 20 March, 2015, the requirements of child psychomotor development and provision of such services were implemented and the guidelines of children and teenagers preventive health care examination in health care institutions were approved. It came into effect from the 1 November, 2015.

From the 1 January 2016 it is planned to introduce non-invasive universal neonatal screening of the life-critical congenital heart defects. The order of the Minister of Health No. V-824, of 2 July, 2015, regulates procedure of universal newborn screening for critical congenital heart defects. Inpatients’ health care institutions providing obstetric services are equipped with pulse oxymeter. Once the universal neonatal screening will be implemented, the possibility will increase to diagnose critical (hemodynamically significant) congenital heart defect, which in the first few days of the newborn life may not be evident in any clinical signs, but later (the first or second week of life) condition of the newborn can suddenly critically deteriorate. The screening is painless and quick and may save the life of the newborn by providing necessary assistance in time. Aforementioned description regulates not only screening order of newborns for critical congenital heart defects but also regulates the responsibility of health care professionals providing health care services for newborns.

According to the Law on Public Health, responsibility of implementation of public health policy is divided into governmental and municipal levels. One of the main public health care functions defined by the above-mentioned law is the monitoring of public health for getting full-scale information on the population’s health and prevailing risk factors, and also of children under 5 years. Other important functions of municipalities are health promotion and child and youth health care implemented by schools’ public health professionals. Qualification requirements for public health professionals working in kindergartens or children day-care centres was defined by the order of the Minister of Health No. V-504, of 19 May, 2011. The scope of school care services for children, also for children under 5, attending kindergartens or children day-care centres also is defined by the order of the Minister of Health No. V-124, of 27 January, 2014. The main functions of public health care specialist in schools are health promotion and education, health risk management, submission of proposals for better children environment, analysis of information from child health checks performed by family doctors and implementation of family doctors recommendations for schools and other health promotion activities.

From the public health safety point of view, it is important to highlight that all kindergartens and children day-care centres must conform to the requirements of Hygiene Regulation „Institution, performing early childhood education: general health safety requirements“ adopted by the order of the Minister of Health No. V-313, 22 April, 2010. “