



Experience with expert paramedics in the assessment process

MUDr. Ludmila Šulcová Hejnalová. MBA, LL.M.
Director, Methodology and Training Division

www.cssz.cz

EUMASS Prague Conference, October 2024



Expert paramedics – expert paramedic healthcare workers

- Expert paramedic position established under Section 8 of Act No 582/1991, as amended, with effect from 01.01.2023
- Expert paramedic – employee with healthcare training, e.g. nurses, paediatric nurses, occupational therapists, health and social care workers, rescue paramedics, physiotherapists
- New position within MAS (Medical Assessment Service (MAS)) assessments can now be made not just by doctors, but also by expert paramedics.

comprehensive definitions given in the legislation

Expert paramedics – beginnings in 2023

- The original “first swallows”, in the shape of assessing physicians’ expert assistants, have been drawing up documents for doctors since 2022
- The newly recruited expert paramedics have healthcare training and have been able to make assessments since 01.01.2023, albeit under the supervision of an assessing doctor



Expert paramedics – a breakthrough in the history of the MAS

- Until 31.12.2022 only a **doctor (physician)** could perform the District Social Security Administration's tasks as defined under Section 8 of Act No 582/1991.
- From 1.1.2023 these tasks can be performed by a **doctor** and expert paramedic – MAS employees with the expert competence to exercise the profession
- Assessments drawn up by an expert paramedic must be approved by a **doctor**, who confirms their accuracy by signature.
- Within 2 years an expert paramedic must successfully complete a certified course arranged for the expert paramedic by the CSSA.
 - he/she will have their expert competence recognised following this **certified** course

Expert paramedics – training

- Induction training from a **doctor**, adaptation process (assignment of a mentor)
- The Institute for Medical Assessment (IMA) methodology department prepares materials focused on training, but also courses and short methodological instruction (usually online)
- Within 2 years, it is mandatory to complete a certified expert paramedic's course; this ends with a test, the CSSA is the accredited body
- Support for training in healthcare and medical assessment
- Objective: a healthcare specialist (although not a doctor with a broad overview of medicine and, at the same time, the necessary expertise in assessment, which he/she can apply in a conclusive assessment

Certified course with accreditation by the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic

"Expert Paramedic"

- Has successfully passed the accreditation procedure: The Czech Ministry of Health has issued a Decision with **the effectiveness of accreditation for this course, with effect from 1.5.2023**
- Certified course – theoretical part, practical part, professional practice
 - 65 hours of theory, 10 hours practical part, 40 hours of professional practice
 - final written test

Following the certified course, the expert paramedic will receive a diploma stating the acquired specialized competence in the field of medical assessment.

Acquired competence obtained after the course:

- 1/ to assess the state of health and the mobility and orientation ability for the purpose of allocating a disabled person's card and for the purpose of a contribution for a special aid
- 2/ to assess the state of health and clients' degree of dependence on care for the purposes of a care allowance
- 3/ to assess the long-term unfavourable state of health of a child for the purposes of state social support
- 4/ to assess clients' state of health and working capacity for the purposes of disability and disabled person's status

Our courses

- In 2023, 2 Certified Courses for Expert paramedics took place
- Both courses had a high success rate and we now have **64** course graduates.
- The successful graduates have received their Certificates of acquired professional competence
- The course leads demonstrably to an improvement in the quality of work: convincing justification in the assessments.

Graduate photo:



Expert paramedics – activity, performance

- Expert paramedics primarily draw up assessments for the purposes of the care allowance and for disability permits and special aids.
- The performance of the activities of expert paramedics with one local jurisdiction, i.e. they assess within the entire republic for the purpose of work efficiency.
- Recommended optimal monthly output: 120 assessments, with the option of working from home

Expert paramedics – growth in the number of recruits

Total number of expert paramedics as at 01.04.2023: 59

Total number of expert paramedics as at 01.07.2023: 72

Total number of expert paramedics as at 01.08.2024: 90

- Planned admissions of expert paramedics to 31.12.2024 – 40
- Some of the expert paramedics work part-time, and continue to work in the healthcare sector

Our experience. . .

- Knowledge gained from the establishment of the expert paramedic position:

Pros:

- The option of assigning work in the MAS department not only to doctors
- Flexibility in allocating assessments for processing across the country
- An increase in the number of processed assessments in line with the increase in the number of trained expert paramedics

Cons:

- Delays due to the fact that by law an assessment must be approved and signed by a doctor, the so-called sanction
- The unattractiveness for MAS doctors of the initial teaching and then of approving assessments by an expert paramedic

Expert paramedics – applicants

Candidates with expertise in occupational therapy, physiotherapy and general nursing, who are familiar with medical documentation from their previous experience in the healthcare sector, appear for the moment to be the most suitable

- Interest from applicants in the position of expert paramedic is gradually increasing
 - the benefit of possible working from home
 - the benefit of part-time work
 - good financial remuneration
 - improved training as part of employment

Development strategy



Future outlook:

- Short-term:
 - Training as part of the expert paramedic certified course and regular training sessions
 - Provision of mentors for expert paramedics by adjusting performance requirements
- Medium-term:
 - Expanding the competences of expert paramedics – following completion of the certified course, the possibility of working at least in part without supervision, i.e. drawing up some assessments without the need for their approval and signature by a doctor
 - adjusting the systematization of expert paramedic places to the required number
- Long-term:
 - Expert paramedics work independently to draw up assessments for the non-insurance agenda



Thank you

