



Association of Educationists and for Women's and Children's Rights Protection LIL

Until the mother does not pay, we will have to keep her

A large number of members of vulnerable groups is Roma and these people in their everyday lives must face challenges which emphasize the fact that there are numerous factors enabling their access to many services in the country. In health, since they lack financial resources many of them have to find ways to the best of their abilities to fulfill the duty imposed by enjoying health services.

A pregnant woman, who is a mother of two children, together with her two-year-old child was admitted in hospital where the child was hospitalized. While she was staying in the hospital with her child, the hospital staff was very nice and professional when providing them with health services until the moment they were to leave the hospital. Since the family could not and did not have financial resources to satisfy the demand from the hospital, the staff started to rebel and told the mother that everyone has paid the amount for additional services while staying in hospital and it has never happened in their hospital not to be paid off a debt. While shrugging shoulders in presence of a representative of our organization, it was pointed that a debt has to be paid off. The words said towards both sides as a sign of an apology were *"Until the mother does not pay, we will have to keep her"*. This is a new practice that was introduced to our organization and it is different in comparison to the previous ones. According to those until present, if a debt was not paid off, discharge papers were not issued or a statement was made that a person has an obligation to pay off a debt in future. However, we assume this was because there were available places in clinics for the new patients, so debtors were discharged from hospitals depending on their condition, but did not have to stay.

We wonder if the keeping means an empty place and no patients in a clinic or it is a new practice of finding a way to pay a debt off.