

Ambulance Crisis in Russia. Bad Example of the Management and Possible Ways of Crisis Solving

Bykov Ilia*

Department of Public Health and Healthcare Organization, Khabarovsk city, Far Eastern State Medical University, Russian

Article Information

Article Type:	Review Article	*Corresponding Author:	Citation:
Journal Type:	Open Access	Bykov Ilia,	Bykov Ilia (2021).
Volume:	Issue: 4	Department of Public Health and Healthcare	Ambulance Crisis in Russia. Bad Example
Manuscript ID:	MHR-2-121	Organization, Khabarovsk city, Far Eastern	of the Management and Possible Ways of
Publisher:	Science World Publishing	State Medical University, Russian,	crisis Solving.
		Tel: +79241127095,	Med Healthcare Rep. 2(4); 1-3
		E-mail: svkofein@yandex.ru	

Received Date: 15 May 2021**Accepted Date:** 29 May 2021**Published Date:** 04 Jun 2021

Copyright: © 2021, Garg S, *et al.*, This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 international License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

ABSTRACT

BACK GROUND

Russian laws guarantee a free emergency care to every Russian citizen. Network of the state own ambulance facilities is carrying on this task in Russia, unfortunately mismanagement of these institutions led to the situation when patients in some cases have to wait ambulance arrival for up to 5 hours.

METHODS

Employees of different levels positions in ambulance facilities in Khabarovsk city, were personally interviewed with guarantee of total anonymity, also large scale of mass media and social media were analyzed on the matter of related publication for better understanding of the society position on that matter, as well as public officials' statements of different levels from all of Russia and laws that that regulate work of the ambulance service were inspected too.

RESULTS

Legal framework obligate telephone operators receive a call and transfer it to the ambulance crew in 4 minutes, then the crew must reach a patient in maximum 20 minutes otherwise their action can

be persecuted in the range from discipline reproof on the work place to criminal prosecution.

Every interviewed employee mentioned same points, they are staff shortage, inability to refuse non-urgent calls, and resulting tendency when patients don't attend a primary healthcare institution and rely only on the ambulance service in any health problems.

Operators are paramedics that have sufficient experience to evaluate patient's condition, and theoretically they can refuse to receive a call as isn't urgent, but there is a law that contains a list of wide range of too general symptoms that can't be ignored, that made a call refusing practically impossible.

After researching a social media in which ambulance's staff from all of Russia can be found, we can make pretty accurate conclusion that similar situation in the ambulance service is appearing thought all of Russia.

By the meantime in the statements of the responsible government officials two major trend can be found, they either deny existence of any problems in emergency healthcare or blame staff shortage and incompetence of the current working ambulance staff.

Considerable part of them mass media cultivates a position that

all problems in emergency healthcare caused by incompetent and lazy ambulance staff and protects only patients regardless of the circumstances. Because of the healthcare providers defenselessness in face of the law, in social media are cultivating almost only negative, accusative to doctors statements both substantiated and unsubstantiated. In the nutshell both mass and social media created a stigma against ambulance employee.

Conclusion

Current situation in the emergency healthcare in Russia caused by combination of the inadequate legal framework, that don't match with practical healthcare, insufficient promotion of the primary care institution role and mismanagement of the ambulance service. It's seems that empowerment of the operators and ambulance crew members in case of decision about urgency of the calls, could decrease volume of calls significantly. Propaganda campaign on the matter of the primary healthcare institutions role can also be helpful in reduction of the volume of non-urgent calls to the ambulance, as well as investment in the primary healthcare institutions and ambulance service for reduction of the staff shortage.

KEYWORDS: Ambulance; Emergency care; Healthcare management; Primary healthcare institutions

BACKGROUND

The constitution of the Russian Federation and connecting laws in healthcare are guarantee a free medical care for every Russian citizen, including an emergency medical care, in that case even every foreigner on the Russian territory by the law must receive an emergency care [1,2]. Network of the state own ambulance facilities is carrying on this task in Russia, unfortunately mismanagement of these institutions led to the situation when patients in some cases have to wait ambulance arrival for up to 5 hours [3]. Consequently, population's discontent with ambulance service increased tremendously, creating a substantial social conflict between patients and ambulance employee [4].

AIM

Comprehend reasons of the aroused situation in the Russian emergency healthcare and formulate possible action that can be done for fixing it.

METHODS

Employees of different levels positions in ambulance facilities in Khabarovsk city, were personally interviewed with guarantee of total anonymity, also large scale of mass media and social media were analyzed on the matter of related publication for better understanding of the society position on that matter, as well as public officials' statements of different levels from all of Russia and laws that that regulate work of the ambulance service were inspected too.

RESULTS

Legal framework that regulates work of the ambulance service obligate telephone operators of the ambulance facilities receive a call and transfer it to the ambulance crew in 4 minutes, then the crew must reach a patient in maximum 20 minutes otherwise their action can be persecuted in the range from discipline reproof on the work place to criminal prosecution, based on the severity of the patient's condition [2,5].

The biggest complain of the doctors, paramedics and nurses of the ambulance can be formulate in a simple phrase: "We are carrying out other's work!". What was said by one the paramedics: "Based on the season from 50% to 90% of the call are not urgent, especially in the fly epidemic season, when 90% of the call formulated as "fever". Basically, what we do is just wrote a [prescription to visit a primary healthcare institution], place that must carry this out, but we [can't] refuse to receive a call even if it's clear that call isn't urgent. While we are carrying other's work some really urgent call may not receive a needed help. Moreover, we are [staff short], it isn't rare when we just can't come to call because every crew are already busy and even have a que of tens waiting call ahead". Every interviewed employee mentioned same points that were mentioned above, they are staff shortage, inability to refuse non-urgent calls, and resulting tendency when patients don't attend a primary healthcare institution and rely only on the ambulance service in any health problems.

Positions of the operators are occupied by paramedics, people with sufficient medical education and experience to adequately evaluate a patient's condition via telephone, and theoretically they can refuse to receive a call as is not urgent, but specific orders of the Healthcare ministry of Russia contain a list of symptoms that ones being reported via telephone can't be ignored by an ambulance service. That very list makes calls refusing practically impossible, because list contain a wide range of too general symptoms without any specification, so in real life operators just receive every call in the ambulance in order to avoid persecution [3]. One operator said made a following statement: "I have been working in the ambulance service for more then 30 years, and in the Soviet Union's time and even in the early years of the Russian Federation, before new laws were enacted, we [could refuse to receive a call]. It wasn't rare on some shifts, when numbers of crews even didn't leave a facility, because there wasn't any need in them".

Some unexpected results were obtain from the ambulance driver interview: "I don't turn our siren on and don't exceed the speed limits, we were told to do so, because there are many traffic cameras and I will receive a fine for over speeding, despite the fact that I have a right to do so, and this fine can be revoke only in the court, but often a man in charge make us to pay this fines from our

pockets when we receive them”.

After researching a social media in which ambulance’s staff from all of Russia can be found, and by additional corresponding with several social media groups leaders, we can make pretty accurate conclusion that similar situation in the ambulance service is appearing thought all of Russia [6,7].

By the meantime in the statements of the responsible government officials two major trend can be found, they either deny existence of any problems in emergency healthcare or blame staff shortage and incompetence of the current working ambulance staff [8,9]. Some members of the social media groups reported that in some institutors there is a 80% staff shortage, that matches with official data of a massive personnel shortages in almost all sectors of the Russian healthcare [10,11]. In the same time healthcare ministry of the Russia refuse to repeal time standards for receiving and conduction of emergency care for ambulance service [12].

Despite the fact that some mass media are trying to objectively cover the situation from all possible sides, without any unsubstantiated accusations [4], considerable part of them are cultivate a position that all problems in emergency healthcare caused by incompetent and lazy ambulance staff and protects only patients regardless of the circumstances [13, 14]. Because of the healthcare providers defenselessness in face of the law, in social media are cultivating almost only negative, accusative to doctors statements both substantiated and unsubstantiated. In the nutshell both mass and social media created a stigma against ambulance employee [15,16].

CONCLUSION

Current situation in the emergency healthcare in Russia caused by combination of the inadequate legal framework, that don’t match with practical healthcare, insufficient promotion of the primary care institution role and mismanagement of the ambulance service, that aggravated by mass and social media inadequate coverage of the situation.

It’s seems that empowerment of the operators and ambulance crew members in case of decision about urgency of the calls in the reasonable scale, could decrease volume of calls significantly. Massive propaganda campaign on the matter of the primary healthcare institutions role can also be helpful in reduction of the volume of non-urgent calls to the ambulance, as well as investment in the primary healthcare institutions and ambulance service in order to improve technical equipment and working conditions along with basic salaries for reduction of the staff shortage. Action to rise a prestige of the medical profession is also extremely needed in today Russia, propaganda campaign and enacting a laws that will protect healthcare providers on duty, similar to existing laws for police officer, can be helpful here. Russian sad experience of in-

adequate official policy and mismanagement in emergency healthcare, should be observed in order to avoidance of those mistakes by other counties.

References

1. Constitution of the Russian Federation
2. Federal law №323 “About basis of the protection of the health of the citizens of the Russian federation”, Government of the Russian Federation, Moscow. 2011.
3. Zenkin N.G., Emergency service system for urban population: problems and directions of perfection. Bulletin of Siberian Medicine. 2017.
4. Official web site of newspapers “Arguments and facts”. 2019. <http://www.aif.ru/dontknows/1230226>
5. Article 124 “Non conduction of medical care”, Criminal codex of the Russian federation, Mocow, 1993.
6. Social media “V kontakte”, group for the medical professional. 2019. <https://vk.com/zloymedik>
7. Social media “V kontakte”, group for the ambulance staff. 2019 <https://vk.com/zloymedikskoraia>
8. National Scientific and Practical Society of Emergency Medical Care website. 2019. http://www.cito03.ru/vertkin_al.html.
9. Scientific and Practical Society of Urgent Medicine, Physicians website. 2019. <http://www.neotlmed.ru/index.php/ob-obshchestve>.
10. Rodigin A., An update on emergency care and emergency medicine in Russia. *Int J Emerg Med.* 2017; 8(1): 42.
11. Krivonos O. Current state and perspectives for emergency care in the Russian Federation. *Emerg Med Care.* 2010; 3: 4-8.
12. Official web site of newspapers “Arguments and facts”. 2019. <http://www.aif.ru/health/295426>.
13. Official web site of newspapers “Temska gazeta”. 2019. <https://nversia.ru/news/vyzov-prinyat-5-prichin-po-kotorym-k-vam-mozhet-ne-dohat-skoraya-pomosch>.
14. Official web site of newspapers “Version Saratov”. 2019 <https://www.b-g.by/society/polezno-znat/yuridicheskiy-likbez-temperatura-ne-povod-skoraya-ne-priehala-na-vyizov>.
15. Social media “V kontakte”, group for the mothers. 2019. <https://vk.com/yazgemat>
16. Social media “V kontakte”, group for suffered patients. 2019. <https://vk.com/medikovnet>.