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COMPLEX CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN THE PRACTICE OF A PRIMARY PEDIATRICIAN

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Slovak republic, a country with 5 million inhabitants, has over 1,3 million of children up to the age of 19. There is a well built structure of primary care. Each child has a mandatory registration with a paediatrician who functions as a primary care provider since childhood through adolescence until adulthood. After 1989 the Slovak government officials, professionals from the area of health, social care and education, non-government organizations, parents and families and all who serve children with special needs agreed that there were many things that could and should be done to improve the lives for people with disabilities and that adequate conditions needed to be created.

Primary paediatricians, being the providers of care, accepted the role of coordinators of care. A programme of complex care which is community based, coordinated, continuous, comprehensive, culturally competent and family oriented was created. It is a common activity of professionals from the area of health, social services and education and families of children with special needs, in cooperation with representatives of territorial government of western part of Slovakia.

The expected outcomes of the programme are improved information network between service providers, less fragmentation of services, strengthening of communities and higher quality of life of families with children with disabilities.

