

## **Advertising of medical centres**

### **Question**

**What laws are in force in Cyprus concerning the advertising of medical centres or services. Whether health care advertising in social networks permitted? Is it permitted to write the price of medical services? Is it permitted to advertise free educational lectures from doctors, which taking place on the territory of the clinic? Are there any specific restrictions on advertising of dentists?**

### **Answer**

According to the Law regarding Doctors (Association, Discipline and Pension Fund) and, in particular, according to the Regulations of the Medical Professional Ethics, the responsibility of each doctor includes the obligation of transmission of the latest developments and achievements in the field of public medicine. This, however, does not entitle doctors to advertise and promote themselves personally. On the contrary, the doctor should advertise and promote innovations in medical diagnosis, treatment and prevention both objective and accessible method, without displaying their own views. The law provides the details of advertising in Chapter 6, with the title "Information - Self-promotion - Advertising and media." Therefore, it is noted in any case cannot be specified competency and achievements of doctor in relation to his/her colleagues in trying to introduce himself/herself and to belittle others. Statements that imply that only this doctor uses a therapeutic method, medication or any other treatment are unethical. Paragraph 43 of Chapter 6 prohibits doctor advertising in the media or in any other manner, as well as advertising by third parties, if he/she knew about it.

With regard to the installation of advertising signs with the name of doctor, specialty and working hours, they must be installed on the inside of the hospital grounds, as well as being a reasonable size (i.e. with the available information and without excesses). Also, the Law provides that the excessive lighting, colour and design does not involve a medical activity. Despite this, the law allows writing a name and doctor specialty in telephone catalogues, on the condition that it is similar to all doctors without any additional registration. Therefore, encouraged and protected by the laws of the patient's right to choose a doctor at their discretion. Additionally, the doctor may inform public about professional activities, in a limited way, not taking advantage of, directly or indirectly, trust of the patient, or his lack of medical knowledge. The content of each information should be legal, decent, honest, not to belittle colleagues, do not contain information of a personal excellence.

The same restrictions on advertising and self-promotion, applied in cases with dentists. However, any disciplinary offenses of dental clinics are regulated by the "Law about Dentists" (Association, Discipline and Pension Fund), which, among

other things, provides for Local Dental Association, and the Pan-Cyprian Dental Association.

In conclusion, free seminars and educational lectures on the hospital grounds are not prohibited by law. Conversely, actions aimed at lifelong learning, are the responsibility of the medical profession.