



Committee Members

Committee Chair



Władysław Sidorowicz (PO)

Committee Deputy Chair



Stanisław Karczewski (PiS)

Committee Deputy Chair



Michał Okła (PO)



Wiesław Dobkowski (PiS)



Ryszard Górecki (PO)



Norbert Krajczyk (PSL)



Waldemar Kraska (PiS)



Rafał Muchacki (PO)



Zbigniew Pawłowicz (PO)



Leszek Piechota (PO)



Henryk Woźniak (PO)

The Committee deals with health promotion, disease prevention, healthcare system organisation, health security, and international cooperation on health issues.

Like other Senate committees, the Health Committee, within its remit, examines the Budget Act and conveys its opinion to the Budget and Public Finance Committee, which is the only committee to present a budget report at a Senate plenary session.

The Health Committee is one of 16 standing committees in the 7th Senate (2007 - 2011).

The Health Committee is a successor of several bodies functioning in the Senate of the Second Polish Republic (1922-1939). At the time, public health matters were handled by the Social Economy Committee, the Education Committee, and the Culture Committee. After the Second World War, the Senate did not resume its activity, as it was abolished by the Communist government following the rigged national referendum in 1946.

The Health and Social Policy Committee was one of the first standing committees established by the restored Senate in 1989. In 1997, it was split into two committees: the Family and Social Policy Committee and the Health Committee.

The activities undertaken by the Committee correspond to the scope of activity of the Ministry of Health.

The Committee meetings are attended by government representatives, social partners representing professional self-governments of doctors, nurses, and pharmacists, as well as by employers' organizations and non-governmental organisations. The Committee cooperates with independent experts.

### The Committee in the First Six Terms

#### of the Restored Senate

(1989-2007)

Poland's political transformation of the 1990s had a major impact on the Committee's legislative activities. At the time most legislative efforts were directed toward improving Poland's healthcare system, protecting patients' rights, and securing the interests of healthcare workers and employers. The focus was on the issues of social and health insurance, as well on the role of the local government as the founding body of the healthcare institution.

One of the major achievements of the Committee was a bill on Medical Treatment Facilities. Its adoption by the Polish Parliament in 1991 provided the foundation for the health care system in Poland in the 1990s. Moreover, the Committee proposed a bill on Social Insurance which was, however, rejected by the Parliament.

It was upon the Committee's initiative that in 1997 the Senate held a debate on the state of the nation's health. In the years 1997-2001, the Committee was actively engaged in drafting legislation defining new principles for financing health care. At that time, the health insurance system was introduced.

In 2005, upon the Committee's initiative the Act establishing the National Programme for Combating Cancer was adopted by the Parliament, leading up to the launch of a long term cancer prevention plan.

Between 2005 and 2007, the Health Committee was tasked with examining issues concerning the development of the new, medical rescue system, as well as of modernising of the health care system and restructuring its liabilities.

### The Committee in the 7<sup>th</sup> Senate

(2007-2011)

Since 2007 the Committee has contributed to the further development of legislation on medical rescue and reform of the health care system. Most matters within the Committee's charge between 2007 and 2011, including building hospital networks, creating the guaranteed services package and contracting health services, were of paramount importance to the functioning of health care system in Poland.

#### Non-legislative Activities

The Committee offers a wide range of seminars and conferences. Between 2006 and 2007, the Health Committee, the Family and Social Policy Committee, the British Embassy in Warsaw, the International Labour Organisation, and the Association of Friends for Integration organised a series of seminars devoted to the development of the support system for the disabled. As a result, a set of guidelines was developed for creating policies and legal norms in respect of the disabled persons together with recommendations for appropriate legislative action. Currently, the Committee takes an active role in promoting healthy lifestyle. It sparked off debates on topics such as prevention of drug abuse, tobacco use, diabetes and obesity among children and youth. Examples of the Committee's activities in 2008 and 2009 include a conference on professional nursing services in Poland and a conference on immunizations for children and youth. The role of the local government as the founding body of the healthcare institution was the subject of another conference, held in partnership with the Local Government and State Administration Committee. Following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the Committee has been issuing opinions on EU draft legislation.