

Emergency Medicine in the Czech Republic

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Emergency Medicine in the Czech Republic has a mostly anaesthesiological professional background. EM exists as an independent medical speciality since 1998.

Overview of elements of maturity of emergency care system in the Czech Republic (CR):

- 1. National Society:** Established in 1994 within Czech Medical Association of J.E. Purkyně, which is a body of all national specialists' societies. The first name was „Society for Prehospital Emergency Care’ and since 1998 the name has changed to „Society for Emergency and Disaster Medicine’. There are two sections within the society – Section of Emergency Departments and Section for Disaster Medicine. 17 National Guidelines were edited by the Society. They address CPR, trauma, disaster medicine, therapeutic hypothermia in CPR and many others.
- 2. System of prehospital care and network of Emergency Departments:** The system of prehospital emergency care is well established and it is now regionally based with 14 regional EMS agencies. It is a combined physician based system – there are crews with physicians and paramedics and crews with paramedics and/or medical nurses. The whole area of the Czech Republic is covered by national emergency line 155 and European emergency line 112. Further, the network of Helicopter EMS is completely covering the whole CR. The emergency departments are in 6 of 10 university hospitals and even in some smaller hospitals but they are a new element of Czech health care system. Nevertheless, we consider the EDs a clinical and educational base of specialty.
- 3. Postgraduate education in EM:** exists since 1998. It originated as a supraspecialty and it is a basic speciality since 2004. In 2010 EM as supraspecialty was reintroduced so both options, supraspecialty and basic, coexist. Department for Emergency and Disaster Medicine within the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education in Prague was established in 1997. There are about 350 physicians specialised in Emergency Medicine.
- 4. Continual medical education in EM:** the number of these activities has increased a lot both for physicians and non-physicians (nurses and paramedics). There are national conferences of Emergency as well as Disaster Medicine accredited by Society for Emergency and Disaster Medicine and other authorities (Czech Medical Chamber, universities). EM specialists also participate in other congresses (Intensive Medicine, Cardiology, Anaesthesiology and Resuscitation in CR and also in abroad).
- 5. Pregraduate education:** For several last years, Emergency medicine is a noncompulsory part of pregraduate education in Olomouc, Hradec Králové, 2nd and 3rd medical faculty of Charles University in Prague and in Brno.
- 6. Textbooks and other publications:** there are already numerous Czech books concerning EM. The most important are: *Emergency Medicine* by J. Pokorný et al., which is a basic textbook and *First Aid for Physicians* by the same editor that is a textbook of emergency management and procedures for other physicians.
- 7. ‘Urgentní medicína’ – Journal for Emergency Care** is Czech peer reviewed journal dedicated to pre- and in-hospital emergency care that exists since 1998. The papers are published in Czech, Slovak and English language.
- 8. Public Health activities** – EM specialists are involved in educational projects in first aid and CPR on many levels. Further, EM specialists are part of interdisciplinary bodies such as the National Committee for Prevention of Children’s Injuries. Members of the Board of Society for EDM are also involved in creation of legislation concerning EM.
- 9. Research:** Several research projects were designed and published even in international environment (Resuscitation, Critical Care etc). Examples include: DIRECT PRAGUE – results of telephone assisted CPR, STRESS OF EMS WORKERS – longitudinal study of burnout and other psychological burden, CAPR – levels of EtCO₂ related to prognosis of CPR, PRE-COOL – 7 studies concerning therapeutic hypothermia in CPR in prehospital settings.
- 10. International Activities:** Czech Society for Emergency and Disaster Medicine is a federation member of EuSEM. Some Czech physicians are actively involved in international cooperation (EM European Curriculum, European Board Examination for Emergency Medicine etc.)