

Healthcare as a Priority National Project of Russia: Problems of Public Administration

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the problems of managing the priority national project "Healthcare". The current problems in the mechanism of public health management, in the system of its financing and control are highlighted, the factors of successful implementation of the national project, achievement of its goals and targets are revealed.

Keywords: *Public Administration; Project Management; Management Decision; National Project; Project Committee; Healthcare; Medical Care*

Introduction

Improving the efficiency of public health management is possible only on the basis of a set of new methods and technologies. Priority national projects have become one of the most important innovations of recent years in the public administration system. They are legitimately considered as a tool for the implementation of the goals of the national development of the Russian Federation, which are of priority importance at the present stage of socio-economic development, requiring significant resources for their solution and assuming a clearly defined end result [1,2,7].

Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 204 dated May 7, 2018 "On National goals and strategic objectives of the Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024" defines nine national development goals of the country for the coming years. To achieve these goals, the Government of the Russian Federation was instructed, together with the state authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, to develop (adjust) national projects (programs), among which the national project "Healthcare" occupies a special place. It is a kind of continuation of the priority national project "Health", which functioned for 7 years (2006 - 2012) and was focused mainly on the development of primary care. The national project "Healthcare" is more extensive both in terms of goals and in terms of funding [3 p.148].

The epidemic of coronavirus infection in Russia has exposed health problems: a shortage of inpatient beds, medical personnel and personal protective equipment; disintegration of management between the center and the regions; slowness of medical care financing

systems. It has seriously affected the implementation of the national project "Healthcare" in 2020, slowing down the movement on all its components of specialized federal projects. In this regard, one of the urgent issues is the analysis of the management problems of the implementation of this national project and the search for ways to improve the mechanism of state management of the healthcare sector, both at the federal and especially at the regional and local levels, where accessibility and quality of medical care is directly ensured.

The mechanism of state management of the national project "Healthcare"

The concept of state management of national projects is based on the concept of "project". It is used in the "Regulations on the Organization of project activities in the Government of the Russian Federation" and means a set of interrelated measures aimed at obtaining unique results in conditions of time and resource constraints¹. The project has certain requirements for the quality and quantity of resources used, the possible level of risk [4 p.18].

The organizational structure of the national project management system assumes the existence of a significant number of permanent and temporary management bodies (the national project committee, departmental project office), as well as supporting structures (competence centers, expert groups, etc.). In particular, the project committee as a collegial management body of the national project: considers and resolves disagreements that arise between the participants of the project detail during the development and implementation of the national project and the federal projects included in it; reviews information and approves reports on the progress of the implementation of the national project and federal projects; requests from the executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, local governments, other bodies and organizations materials and information on the implementation of the national project and federal projects; decides on the achievement of goals, indicators, results and control points, the fulfillment of tasks of federal projects, the decision on their completion (including early); evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities of the heads of federal projects.

The passport of the national project "Healthcare"² was developed by the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation and approved by the Presidium of the Presidential Council for Strategic Development and National Projects on December 24, 2018. The national project has united 8 federal projects related to each other, is interdepartmental, federal executive authorities and all 85 regions of the country participate in its implementation.

Analysis of the components of the process of developing and implementing a national project, such as goal setting, planning, budgeting, allows us to speak about a high level of its organizational readiness. The management of the national project and federal projects has been appointed, organizational structures for their management have been formed. The key subject of the management system of the national project "Healthcare" is the project committee, headed by the curator of the project, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation T.A. Golikova. Project offices have been formed in the Ministry of Health of Russia to manage federal projects that are part of the national project "Healthcare". The regional components of the national project have been developed, coordinated with the Ministry of Health of Russia and approved³.

¹Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 31.10.2018 No. 1288 "On the organization of project activities in the Government of the Russian Federation" (as amended. from 10.07.2020). The Government of Russia. URL: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001201811010027>. (accessed 09.02.2022).

²Passport of the national project "Healthcare" (approved by the Presidium of the Council under the President of the Russian Federation for Strategic Development and National Projects, Protocol No. 16 of December 24, 2018). - Access mode: <https://base.garant.ru/72185920/> (accessed 09.02.2022).

³Report of the State Council of the Russian Federation "On the tasks of the subjects of the Russian Federation in the field of healthcare" // [Electronic resource]. - Access mode: https://liman.astrobl.ru/sites/default/files/doclad_zdr_2019.pdf (accessed: 10.02.2022).

The implementation of the national project “Healthcare” required a special management regime, providing for the permanent participation of the President, the Government and the relevant executive authorities, as well as an accelerated procedure for making managerial decisions by federal and regional health authorities. In addition, it is necessary to ensure the interaction of different levels of government and local self-government bodies, constant monitoring of their work, as well as the interaction of the state, society and business involved in public-private partnership. When making managerial decisions, the role of expert assessments of the medical community increases - members of the Medical Department of the Russian Academy of Sciences, rectors of medical universities, members of the Council of the National Medical Chamber, heads of professional medical and patient associations, chief and practicing physicians.

The basis of the mechanism of public administration is goal-setting, i.e. the presence of specific measurable goals and targets of the national project. The goals of the national project “Healthcare” are to reduce the mortality rate of the population, reduce infant mortality, eliminate the personnel shortage in medical organizations providing primary health care, ensure coverage of all citizens with preventive medical examinations at least once a year, ensure optimal accessibility for the population of medical organizations providing primary health care, simplify the procedure for making an appointment with a doctor, increase the volume of exports of medical services. The above-mentioned goals are of indisputable importance in the light of the prevailing unfavorable trends in the development of public health and the dynamics of public health.

The national project has 9 targets planned to be achieved by 2024 (Table 1).

№ p/p	Target indicator	Year		
		2019	2021	2024
1	Reduction of mortality of the working-age population (up to 350 cases per 100 thousand population)	437,0	401,0	350,0
2	Reduction of mortality from diseases of the circulatory system (up to 450 cases per 100 thousand people)	545,5	505,5	450,0
3	Reduction of mortality from neoplasms, including malignant (up to 185 cases per 100 thousand people)	199,5	193,5	185,0
4	Reduction of infant mortality (up to 4.5 cases per 1 thousand children born)	5,4	5,0	4,5
5.1	Staffing of medical posts in units providing medical care on an outpatient basis (%)	81,0	86,0	95,0
5.2	Staffing of positions of secondary medical personnel in units providing medical care in outpatient settings (%)	90,0	92,0	95,0
5.3	The number of specialists involved in the system of continuous education of health professionals, including with the use of distance education technologies (thousand people)	350	850	1880
6.1	Ensuring that all citizens of preventive medical examinations at least once per year (%)	41,8	45,0	70,0
6.2	Increase to 80% of children aged 15-17 years of preventive health checkups in order to preserve their reproductive health (%)	60,0	70,0	80,0

Table 1: Targets of the national project “Healthcare”.

Source: Compiled by the author based on the analysis of the passport of the national project “Healthcare”.

To date, the stated strategic goals of the national project related to improving the efficiency of work in the field of healthcare, reducing mortality, increasing fertility, etc. have not been fully achieved, are in the process of revision, taking into account the increased role of healthcare as a result of the consequences of the pandemic. The national development goals have been extended until 2030 in accordance with Presidential Decree No. 474 of July 21, 2020. A national goal has been set - "preservation of the population, health and well-being of people". As part of this goal, it is necessary by 2030 to ensure: a steady growth in the population of the Russian Federation; an increase in the life expectancy of the population up to 78 years. It should be noted that the main contribution of the healthcare system to the dynamics of the country's population is the reduction of mortality. However, the increase in the birth rate also partly depends on the effectiveness of the health system - this is the implementation of programs to preserve the reproductive health of citizens, increasing the availability of medical and preventive care for children and adolescents, reducing infant mortality.

In the process of implementing the national project "Healthcare", there was a need to adjust not only its targets, the timing of their achievement, but also the content. So, the director of the Institute of Health Economics of the Higher School of Economics L. Popovich proposes to form a federal project "Immune health of the population", the importance of which was confirmed by the current coronavirus epidemic. The President of the Russian Academy of Sciences A. Sergeev considers the absence of such an important aspect as the development of medical science in the content of the national project to be an omission. The head of the Working Group on the implementation of the national project, created under the State Duma Committee on Health Protection, B. Mendelevich proposed to supplement the national project with the section "Mental health of the population". As an argument in favor of such a decision, the deputy called the number of Russians registered with psychiatrists - 1 million.

The management of the implementation of the national project "Healthcare" involves assessing the effectiveness of the national project on the scale of both the whole healthcare industry and a separate medical organization (institution) based on the technology of social standards and direct assessment by the population of the social effectiveness of the activities of authorities. It is necessary to ensure that the population is constantly informed about the implementation of the national project, monitoring of mass media, social networks and the Internet information and telecommunications network; to restore the practice of publishing an annual State report on the availability and quality of medical care according to established indicators in dynamics, by region.

One of the key tasks of the national project is the informatization of the public health system, designed to improve the quality and accessibility of medical care. This task is being implemented within the framework of the federal project "Creation of a unified digital healthcare circuit based on a unified state information system in the field of healthcare (EGISZ)", aimed at creating mechanisms for interaction of medical organizations based on EGISZ, the introduction of digital technologies and platform solutions until 2024, which will ensure digital transformation and increase the efficiency of the industry at all levels, create conditions for citizens to use electronic services and services in the field of healthcare. It is necessary to consolidate the experience of using digital technologies accumulated during the pandemic. The Ministry of Health of Russia has created a register of patients with coronavirus. Digital technologies were used for online consultations with doctors and interaction with citizens: a self-examination service was implemented on the Public Services portal, which was used by almost 800 thousand people.

Financing of the national project "Healthcare": problems and solutions

The expected effectiveness of the national Health Care project is largely related to the concentration of management efforts and budget allocations on the priorities of state policy in the field of health protection. The amount of funding from the federal budget will amount to 1,366.7 billion rubles (Table 2), more than half of these funds will be spent during 2019 - 2021. The largest share of the project budget is planned to be directed to the fight against cancer, more than 56%. In addition, the national project will make it possible to level out some manifestations of inequality of the subjects of the Russian Federation in terms of the level of financial security of territorial programs of

state guarantees of free medical care to citizens, since the largest share of project financing is planned from the federal budget - 79%, another 21% falls on other sources (Table 2). A distinctive feature of the national project "Healthcare" is the attraction, albeit insignificant, of funds from extra-budgetary sources, including the Mandatory Medical Insurance Fund [5, p.7].

Sources of financing	The amount of financing, billion rubles	Share in the total volume, %
Federal budget	1366,7	79,2
Budgets of the subjects of the Russian Federation	265,0	15,4
Extra-budgetary sources	94,1	5,4
Total	1725,8	100

Table 2: Sources of financing of the national project "Healthcare".

Source: Compiled by the author based on the analysis of the passport of the national project "Healthcare".

However, due to the negative consequences of the pandemic for the economy and social complex, the draft budget for 2021 - 2022 includes a reduction in financial support for federal projects "Combating cardiovascular diseases" and "Development of children's healthcare, including the creation of a modern infrastructure for providing medical care to children"⁴. At the same time, it is planned to increase financial support for such a project as "Providing medical organizations of the healthcare system with qualified personnel". Such a decision is caused by the continuing outflow of personnel from the industry, registered by the Accounting Chamber of the Russian Federation - in 2018, there were fewer doctors by another 5.8 thousand, and nurses by 32.7 thousand. Urgent and reducing the quality of medical care to the population are such problems as the lack of doctors of narrow specialization providing medical care to children, incomplete staffing of the pediatric service, insufficient qualifications of pediatricians.

The problem of assessing the effectiveness of spending budget funds allocated for the implementation of the national project becomes particularly acute. According to the proposal of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, in 2020, due to the current situation with the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus infection, it became possible, if necessary, to adjust the use of federal budget funds for priority areas of the social sphere, including healthcare. In particular, as of September 1, 2020, the federal Government has allocated additional funds to fight the epidemic in the amount of almost 210 billion rubles. These funds were used to purchase ambulances, ventilators, personal protective equipment, medicines, as well as incentive payments to medical workers providing medical care (participating in the provision, providing medical care) for the diagnosis and treatment of a new coronavirus infection.

On the importance of monitoring and controlling the implementation of the national project "Healthcare"

Monitoring is an important element of the public administration system for the implementation of national projects. It is a system of measures to measure the actual parameters, calculate the deviation of the actual parameters from the planned parameters, analyze their causes, predict the progress of national projects, make management decisions to identify, coordinate and implement possible corrective actions⁵. Monitoring of national projects is carried out by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation and other state control bodies.

⁴Federal Law No. 385-FZ dated 08.12.2020 "On the Federal Budget for 2021 and for the planning period of 2022 and 2023" // Access mode: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc (accessed 08.02.2022).

⁵Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of 31.10.2018 No. 1288 "On the organization of project activities in the Government of the Russian Federation" (as amended. from 10.07.2020). The Government of Russia. URL: <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001201811010027>. (accessed 09.02.2022).

Monitoring is carried out using the project activity information system. To monitor the implementation of the national projects "Demography", "Healthcare", "Education" and "Science", a separate monitoring system has been created, operating on the basis of the Center for Information Technologies and Systems of Executive Authorities (CITiS). It works in parallel with the current electronic system for managing all national projects within the framework of the Ministry of Finance's "Electronic Budget" system. At the same time, employees of the government apparatus, federal and regional ministries regularly face technical failures in the electronic subsystem that controls the implementation of national projects [6, p.56].

Monitoring and control of the implementation of national projects is a priority task of the control bodies. Thus, on behalf of the President, the Federal Financial Monitoring Service, together with the Treasury of Russia, launched a monitoring system for the movement of money within the framework of national projects, which allows you to control the allocated funds and identify unscrupulous performers. Only in the Moscow region, for example, in 2019, contracts with unscrupulous executors of the national project "Healthcare" in the amount of 450 million rubles were terminated.

Reform of the healthcare management system is needed

According to experts, during the implementation of the national Healthcare project, such shortcomings in the healthcare management system as decentralization in the management of regional healthcare, the dispersion of key health protection functions in different departments, and the presence of a mass of contradictions in the regulatory framework became apparent. Regional and local authorities are often unable to financially provide the economic and financial guarantees of medical care established at the federal level.

There is insufficient coordination between the health system and the sanitary and epidemiological service. Today, the powers to ensure the sanitary and epidemiological well-being of the population, including the fight against epidemics, have been dispersed across three departments (Rospotrebnadzor, the Ministry of Health of Russia, the Federal Medical and Biological Agency). Accordingly, there is no vertical management headed by the relevant department - the Ministry of Health of Russia, as it was in Soviet times and before 2012 in Russia. The development of some vaccines is the responsibility of the scientific institutes of Rospotrebnadzor, respectively, the Ministry of Health cannot directly influence this process, and there is duplication of functions and unjustified competition. This situation leads to a blurring of responsibility for the results, inefficient spending of funds and the inability to coordinate actions from a single professional center in the event of an epidemic.

To resolve the above-mentioned contradictions, it is proposed to take measures to centralize the management of the Russian healthcare system, namely: subordinate regional healthcare management bodies directly to the Ministry of Health of Russia, while clarifying the place and role of regional and municipal healthcare; subordinate the Ministry of Health of Russia to the sanitary and epidemiological service, separating it from the structure of Rospotrebnadzor, as well as other services responsible for public health safety, including the All-Russian Center for Disaster Medicine "Protection".

Conclusion

Concluding the analysis of the effectiveness of the management of the national project "Healthcare", we note that the introduction of the project approach for the Russian economy and social sphere is of strategic importance, since its application contributes to the increase in the efficiency of resource use, stimulating innovation, reducing corruption. Therefore, the interest of public administration bodies at all levels in the development and use of innovative methodological approaches to effective solutions in the field of management of the economy and social complex of the country is increasing.

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