

SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES

Let Him Pay who "Spoiled the Music"

The state invests considerable resources in the health of its citizens, but doesn't always get the appropriate returns on its investment. And it is precisely this unbalanced situation that makes the topic of the article below, written by Olonetskiy Central Regional Hospital Chief Physician M. Tselishchev, so urgent.

Free medicines for children under three, vaccinations, various preventive measures in kindergartens and schools--this is only a partial list of what we as a society invest our resources in, having determined that protection of motherhood and childhood are high priorities if our social welfare system is to develop.

Add to that free in-patient treatment, check-ups and observation in polyclinics, quick medical service, medical certificates covered by the social insurance fund...And these are only isolated parts of the picture. They have been mentioned here to illustrate the main issue: how to increase the returns from investments in health programs.

Let us look at the principal factors that affect health. Medicine has come to the conclusion that a person's health depends 50 percent on the individual's lifestyle (i.e. on himself, traditions and social customs), 20 percent on the condition of his environment, and only 8.5 percent on the level of medicine provided.