

complications: many patients suffer from myocardial infarctions and cerebral accidents around the age of 45. The third serious health problem, which intensified in the last few years, is drug addiction. The number of drug users in the neighborhood exceeds 150 and increases fast. Some of them are willing to undergo treatment but there are no programs for them locally.

Other diseases of common occurrence include bronchial asthma, with half of the patients being children, diabetes and struma nodosa. It turned out that there are diabetes patients who have not been treated with insulin and have developed severe complications such as ulcerations of the feet, diabetic polyneuropathy, retinopathy and nephropathy. Conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, Behterev's disease and others are less common.

Gynecological diseases are a serious problem for the women in the neighborhood. The research revealed more than 60 different cases: cysts, ovary abscesses, myomas, uterine cancer, etc.

Pathological conditions of the locomotory system are also quite common. As a result of excessive physical strain Roma develop degenerative joint or vertebral transformations, which lead to permanent disability at an early age.

The research team identified 43 cases of different hereditary diseases: 11 ophthalmic, 12 involving deaf-mutism, 15 neuromuscular and 5 cases of fibromatosis.

As in most Roma ghettos, infectious diseases present a serious problem. Tuberculosis is of highest occurrence with 60 cases, 14 of them involving children. All patients receive treatment. Second comes viral hepatitis. In summer dysentery becomes epidemic. Two cases of viral meningitis have also been registered in the neighborhood. This year 15 people contracted tick fever; three of them died. There are also 15 cases of venereal diseases (7 patients with syphilis and 8 with gonorrhoea). Five people have been diagnosed with echinococcosis.

Mental illnesses, predominantly effective psychosis, have marked a considerable increase in the last few years. Most of the patients have been registered but are not being treated systematically. Twenty cases of epilepsy have been identified.

More than 1% of the people in the neighborhood have been evaluated by the territorial expert medical commission and have been certified as having different disabilities. In fact, however, the percentage of disabled people is much higher. On one hand, Roma experience serious difficulties in filing all the documents necessary for medical retirement because of discriminatory attitudes, inability to pay for lab tests, or other problems. On the other hand, they are not familiar with the conditions and the criteria for retirement, as well as with their rights. General practitioners do not do enough to help them.

Senovo, Viatovo County, Rouse Region

The population of Senovo numbers 2,136 people, 495 of them are Roma. They live in 95 houses in the Roma neighborhood, situated in the outskirts of the town. All of them belong to the same subgroup: they have a Turkish identity and they are bilingual, speaking both Romany and Turkish. More than 1/3 of the people living in the Roma neighborhood (170) are below the age of 18; only 1% are above 70.

This year a Roma association, Integro, was established in the town of Senovo with the mission to support the social integration of Roma in rural areas and to create conditions for preserving and developing the ethnic and cultural traditions of the Roma community.

The Association develops various activities targeted to improving the social and economic situation of Roma, enhancing their knowledge and education, including on health issues, and creating an information database to help solve the social and economic problems of the Roma community in the Viatovo County: demographic data, statistical information on social, eco-