

The Vlček Family Foundation will contribute more than 1.5 billion Czech crowns to the care of seriously ill children

Prague, 15 March 15, 2021: A new philanthropic project is being established in the Czech Republic. It will bring together a team of experienced professionals, deep resources, and a clearly defined focus. Married couple, Katarína and Ondřej Vlček, founded [the Vlček Family Foundation](#) and have invested assets worth 1.5 billion Czech crowns. The foundation will help families with a seriously ill child.

By founding the foundation, the Vlčeks are following on from the work of their private charity organisation Golden Fish, whose mission is to fulfil the wishes of children suffering from life-threatening diseases. *“The Golden Fish has fulfilled the wishes of more than 650 children since 2015 and will continue its mission. Through the newly established foundation, we want to build, among other things, a children’s hospice and palliative care centre, services that we consider them to be very important. Every year, over eight hundred Czech families learn that their child will never recover. We want to help at least some of them to better face these challenges and help to create a future where caring for the quality of life of seriously ill children is as important as trying to treat them,”* says Ondřej Vlček.

The Vlčeks see the foundation as their life project. *“We want to enable parents to experience as much joy as possible with their sick children, even in the most difficult period of their lives, regardless of the stage of the child’s illness. We would like to create a place for them where they can easily find what they need - help, support, understanding, comfort, peace and security,”* says Katarína Vlčková.

In addition to the founders, members of the statutory and supervisory boards will also play a key role in fulfilling the Vlček Family Foundation’s goals. The boards engaged respected professionals in finance, law and taxation, with extensive experience in managing large projects and with high personal integrity. Ladislav Sekerka, a renowned expert in international financial, will serve on the Board of Directors alongside the Vlčeks. Others will help as members of the Supervisory Board, formed jointly by Alan Rassaby, former head of human resources, chief lawyer, and corporate secretary of Avast, Jan Žůrek, President of the Czech Business Council for Sustainable Development and former managing partner of KPMG, as well as Lubor Žalman, former CEO of Raiffeisenbank and current partner in EnCor Wealth Management.

Their extensive experience and knowledge will ensure the foundation’s long-term sustainability so that its extraordinary financial assets will continuously generate sufficient revenues to operate its projects. They will also co-operate with paediatric palliative care professionals and physicians caring for seriously ill children.

“The establishment of the Vlček Family Foundation is unique in the Czech Republic and Central Europe in terms of amount of private funds devoted to a clearly defined philanthropic purpose. The Vlčeks’ philanthropic plans deserve great admiration. I have no doubt that they will inspire other patrons and philanthropists who have their own visions and a desire to realise them,” says Kateřina Ronovská, member of the Board of Directors of the Via Clarita Foundation that provided expert consultations on the establishment and structure of the newly established foundation.

Currently, the [Vlček Family Foundation](#) faces a challenging task of building a children's hospice and a related palliative care centre. The project relying on extensive experience from abroad, also includes a training centre for the professional public and a library. Construction of the hospice and palliative care centre is expected to take five years to complete; it will also become the seat of the newly established foundation and accommodate the Golden Fish foundation, which has been operating for more than six years. The foundation intends to use all the resources for its own projects and does not currently plan to provide financial support to any third parties.

"I see the construction of the children's in-patient hospice, which would also serve as an educational and community centre, as an essential step in providing comprehensive support to the families of children who suffer from a serious life-limiting illness. So I am delighted with this project not only as of the head of a professional association but also as a physician who meets the families of such sick children every day," says MUDr. Mahulena Exnerová, the Chairwoman of the Children's Palliative Care Section of the Czech Society of Palliative Medicine of the ČLS JEP (Czech Medical Association of J. E. Purkyně). *"Despite all the progress gained in recent years in providing palliative care to children, there is still a significant lack of support for seriously ill children and their families in the Czech Republic, including end-of-life care. Parents caring for long-term seriously ill children are calling out for such services and facilities. It's something that would really make their lives easier,"* she adds.

Katarína and Ondřej Vlčeks raise three sons and consider establishing the foundation to be a perfect way to make a meaningful use of the family assets. Katarína Vlčková understands the complexity of long-term care for seriously ill children, mainly through her work as a physician in the mobile hospice Cesta domů, where she meets not only adults but also paediatric patients at the end of their lives. Ondřej Vlček brings an extraordinary depth of operational experience derived from his many years of experience as a senior executive of Avast, one of the largest publicly listed technology companies in Europe. Mr. Vlček has gifted approx. 50% of his Avast stock holding to enable the foundation to carry out its mission.

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