



The Newsletter of European Medical Specialists

UEMS — EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

The Executive and the Secretariat of UEMS wish you their best Seasons' Greetings and a Happy New Year 2011!



European Board of Anaesthesiology

Malta, 13th November 2010

The European Board of Anaesthesiology met in Malta on 13th November 2010. In the framework of this meeting, Commissioner John Dalli addressed the audience with key message regarding the challenges health professionals, and Anaesthesiologists in particular, are facing today. He notably emphasized the role of organisations such as UEMS which have *“a key role to play in contributing to national and European policies aimed at securing a strong health workforce for the future”*.

Commissioner Dalli stressed the importance of improving training of medical specialists through continuing professional development since *“Europe needs to count on a skilled, engaged and healthy workforce – a workforce that is capable of adjusting to technological change, to new patterns of work organisation and to the emerging needs of patients”*.

The EBA aims at:

- Delivering optimum, high quality and safe healthcare (anaesthesiology) to all citizens of the EU, including the study and promotion of the highest level of training of anaesthesiologists;
- Maintaining and further developing the professional autonomy of European medical specialists (anaesthesiologists);
- Promoting of free movement of specialist doctors (anaesthesiologists) within the EU;
- The active participation in, and representation within the framework of the organised medical specialist profession in the Member

“Europe needs to count on a workforce that is capable of adjusting to technological change, to new patterns of work organisation and to the emerging needs of patients”



*Mr John Dalli
EU Commissioner
for Health*

EPF Roundtable on cross-border care Brussels, 1st December 2010

On the 1st December 2010 the European Patients Forum (EPF) organised a high level round table on the draft directive on Patients' rights in cross border care. Aiming at addressing key issues regarding the ongoing negotiation on this text, several stakeholders gathered at the Solvay Library to discuss further the potential impact of this legislation on healthcare systems.

This conference entitled “Moving forward on Health Inequalities, Patients' Rights, Quality and Safety” was an occasion to emphasise the major challenges Healthcare systems are facing today. Keynote speakers were invited to present their views.

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Ministerial Conference: Innovative approaches for chronic illnesses in public health and healthcare systems

Brussels, 20th October 2010

On the 20th October 2010 a Ministerial Conference was held under the auspices of the Belgian Presidency following the conference on musculo-skeletal disease organised by the European Ligue against Rheumatism (EULAR) aiming at addressing the issue Chronic Diseases.

During this conference, keynote speakers insisted on the absolute necessity for early diagnosis and treatment as the main way to tackle this issue. In this regard, Prof. Paul Emery, the President of EULAR, highlighted the fact that "rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases should be recognised as one of the most important public health challenges, given the enormous burden of these disorders on individuals' lives, the social and health systems, and thereby the whole economy".

Olivier Belle, Member of the Cabinet of Laurette Onkelinx, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Affairs and Health, expressed the commitment of the Belgian Presidency to address this issue politically given the importance of the burden of chronic disease on Healthcare systems.

Susanna Jakab, Regional Director of the WHO Europe, emphasised the need for including Health in All Policies.

Several determinants of chronic disease such as alcohol, physical activity, overweight or obesity must be dealt with. Reducing Chronic Disease by coping with their determinants can only be achieved through a multi-sector approach.

One of the main outcomes of the ministerial conference was the adoption of a set of recommendations and specific initiatives for their implementation. The recommendations embraced six areas of intervention: rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases as a priority on health policy agendas; rights of patients to quality healthcare and to full inclusion in economic and social life; early prevention and referral; evidence-based treatment and standards of care; patient involvement in the design, implementation and evaluation of healthcare services; and increased research funding.

1. The European Union and its Member States should recognise the socio-economic importance of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases of all ages and assign them appropriate priority
2. There is an urgent need to prioritise basic and clinical research regarding the causes, predictors, management and impact of these chronic diseases



3. The European Union and Member States should ensure that people with disabilities related to rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases have the right to full inclusion in society; this encompasses optimisation of environmental and life-style factors, the availability of self-management tools, and respect for the right to a flexible education and work environment

4. People with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases should receive prompt access to high quality care, ideally in specialised centres, thus maximising long-term quality of life

5. Management of rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases should be in accordance with evidence-based recommendations in every European Union Member State

6. People with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases are experts in living with their condition and should be involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of their services

The recommendations on chronic diseases were presented and adopted by the EPSCO Council in December 2010.

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EPPOSI workshop on a European Strategy for chronic conditions

Given the growing importance of chronic disease across Europe, many voices are raised to stress the urgent need for a holistic approach at European Level. In this regard, the EPPOSI organised on the 9th of December a workshop aiming at completing the Ministerial Conference on innovative approaches for chronic diseases and elaborate recommendations to implement at European level a clear strategy for chronic diseases.

Prof. Wolfgang Grisold, Past-President of the UEMS Section of Neurology, addressed the audience and recalled the importance to tackling this issue of Chronic disease management to im-

prove the quality of life of European citizens. Taking the example of Stroke, Dr Grisold highlighted the role of Medical Specialist together with patients to manage the disease and develop a prevention scheme which will help the patient recover.

He ended his intervention with the presentation of a study which enhances the role of social network in the rehabilitation process. According to this study, age, various factors such as the type of chronic disease, the absence/presence of a spouse, the absence/presence of children have an impact on long-term care utilization and should be considered by decision-makers.

Brussels, 9th December 2010



For more information please visit http://www.epposi.org/web/activities/upcoming-events/_event/european-strategy-for-chronic-conditions/EventDetail.aspx

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Stakeholders Conference on Active Ageing - Brussels, 26th November 2010

The European Commission organised on the 26th November a stakeholder consultation with regard to the European Initiative on Active and Healthy ageing. The aim of this initiative is to address the issue of ageing population and increase by two years the lifespan in good health.

Three working areas are being proposed as a mean to ensure that European citizens will live longer in good health.

- The first working area will focus on citizens as patients and consumers
- The second will focus on social and healthcare system

- the third will consider EU-related markets enabling the elderly to lead independent and healthy lives

Three Directorate General are involved in this initiative. The aim is to foster synergies within the Commission and to pave the way for concrete actions to tackle the issue of active and healthy ageing.

Keynote speeches were delivered by the Commissioner for Health, John Dalli, the Commissioner of Digital Agenda, Ms Nelly Kroes as well as Ms Paola Testori-Coggi (DG SANCO) and Mr Robert Madelin (DG INFSO).

Ms Nelly Kroes insisted on the need for each stakeholder to take concrete steps to implement the actions of the initiative. In this regard she welcomed the large participation of stakeholders and encouraged toward practical measures to achieve the common goal.

Mr Dalli expressed his commitment to address the issue of active ageing all the more that “demographic projections for Europe, make this issue a necessity – and a burning one at that – rather than a just policy option”. He added that “in practice, the Partnership will serve to bring players together, to break down barriers, to mobilise expertise and resources across the entire value innovation chain in order to explore health innovation in a way that responds to the needs of older people.”

Dr Bernard Maillet (UEMS Secretary-General) was among the panelists addressing the audience with key message on this issue. 'Active ageing starts from birth' was the key message of Dr Maillet who insisted on the need to have a healthy workforce to provide good quality of care to ageing citizens thus expressing healthcare professionals commitment to get involved in this issue.

The Secretary General pointed out that in order for the population to receive the highest quality of care to enable active and healthy ageing, Member States ought to invest in Health sector without considering Health as a loss of money but rather as an investment.

The UEMS made several recommendations to ensure active and healthy ageing of European citizens.

Various stakeholders took part in the conference and stressed specific needs so as to tackle this issue.

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European Parliament resolution on long-term care for older people

The European Parliament has adopted a motion for a resolution drafted by its Committee on Employment and Social affairs which sheds the light on long-term care for older people. This non legislative resolution aims to raise awareness about the impact of demographic changes on the Healthcare systems and the challenge that all European countries are facing today or will deal with in the coming years. Member States are asked to tackle the issues of poor payment of care work, shortage of personnel, lack of training or inadequate training, which all put a strain on care provision.

MEPs insisted on the importance for the Commission to address this issue in a context of ageing population. The UEMS welcomes this initiative which aims at improving healthcare throughout Europe. The UEMS is also concerned that *“the funding and provision of specialist geriatric medicine has been reduced over the years, and that not sufficient training has been given to other specialists on older people's issues”*.



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Proposed written declaration on fighting colorectal cancer in the EU

Further to the public hearing in the European Parliament on the 15th September 2010 regarding the Colorectal Cancer, a written declaration was issued by several MEPs: Pavel Poc, Frieda Brepoels, Cristian Silviu Buşoi, Jo Leinen, Alojz Peterle in order to raise awareness about this disease which is the second most frequent cause of death from cancer in the European Union.

Once adopted the Written Declaration will increase political pressure on the Member States and the European Commission to finally implement screening and prevention measures for Colorectal Cancer in all EU Member State. Members of European Parliament are now campaigning to collect the required number of signature to have the Written declaration adopted.

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European Board of Anaesthesiology



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States of the EU, to all relevant statutory EU agencies and any other authority and/or organisation dealing with issues relating to the medical profession.

The UEMS operates through its Specialist Sections to improve and harmonise the training of medical specialists

according to the highest standards of quality of care. The EBA is the body established at the European level to address the harmonisation of training for European Anaesthesiologists.

For more information please visit the following web site: <http://www.eba-uems.eu/>

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EPF Roundtable the draft directive on patients' rights in cross-border care

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John Dalli, The European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, insisted in his speech on the overall aspect of the draft Directive which is "to clarify patients' rights to access safe and good quality treatment across EU borders and be reimbursed for it." The Commissioner presented the outstanding issues that should be addressed in the negotiation between the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council. He addressed three issues which are to be dealt with:

The system of prior authorisation for hospital, specialised and cost intensive care: patients should be able to travel around Europe to receive the treatment and to know in advance how the healthcare system works and on what grounds prior authorisation could be refused

Quality and safety of Healthcare: the draft directive is to "pave the way towards a convergence in standards in this area"

eHealth: the added value of eHealth is undeniable and "this Directive offers a good opportunity to formalise eHealth in EU legislation for the first time to ensure compatibility of systems across the EU."

MEP Françoise Grossetête was rapporteur on the draft directive during the 2nd reading in the European Parliament. In her report she proposed amendments to the text adopted by the Council on the 13th of September.

During the discussion Key speakers addressed the audience. MEP Antonia Parvanova insisted on health inequalities that should be reduced with the provisions of this draft directive. The aim of this text is to guarantee that European citizens can have equal access to high quality medical care.

Dr Maillet (*UEMS Secretary-General*) was among the panelists to present Health professionals views on this issue. He notably pointed to the need to provide understandable, transparent and reliable information both to patients and professionals. He also reported on the UEMS commitment and work towards quality improvement with the current



development of an e-platform aiming at doctors' competence assessment. Other key elements in his view encompassed the issues relating to reference centres, technology development, equity of care, professional liability and sustainability of resources.

The UEMS has been very active during the legislative process and contacted several MEPs to present the UEMS and its position on this issue. The position paper 2008.55 adopted in 2008 whereby the UEMS make some recommendations has been sent to MEPs and very much appreciated. The UEMS will continue its strong collaboration with European Institutions to make its position known.

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