



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate C - Public Health and Risk Assessment
C4 – Health Determinants

Brussels,
EUHPF Secretariat

EU HEALTH POLICY FORUM

BRUSSELS, 21 January 2009

Draft Minutes

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Main focus of the meeting:

- The mandate of the EU Health Policy Forum
- Priorities for the Work Plan 2009/2010

2. DATE AND SITE

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| Date | 21 January 2009 |
| Time | 10:00 – 16:30 |
| Site | Brussels, 36 rue Froissart, Centre Albert Borschette – Room 4A |

All meeting documents will be published on the public health website under:
http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/health_forum/events_health_forum_en.htm

MORNING SESSION

WELCOME AND OPENING

Chair: Michael Hübel, Head of Unit C4 DG SANCO

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| Documents: | Draft agenda; Minutes of the EUHPF meeting on 30 May 2008; Minutes of the EUHPF meeting on 10 December 2008; Provisional list of participants. |
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Mr Hübel, Head of Unit C4 at DG SANCO opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He described the year 2009 as a year of transition that will bring many challenges but also many opportunities. After brief information on the meeting programme and the timing the members adopted the draft agenda.

The minutes of the previous meetings that took place on 30 May and 10 December 2008 were adopted by the participants without any modification.

Mr. Hübel informed the participants that the EUHPF Secretariat will continue to function during next few months. The Secretariat will carry out a survey on satisfaction of EUHPF members with its services.

THE HEALTH FORUM'S ROLE: A RENEWED MANDATE

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| Document: | Draft EU Health Forum Mandate; |
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Mr. Hübel presented the draft Mandate document developed on the basis of previous reports, meetings and discussions with members. The presentation was followed by discussion with the participants.

The written comments received prior to the meeting from member organisations were included in the final draft version. In a written contribution, EURO CARE raised concern regarding the conditions of membership, that members should cover a broad range of issues. Mr. Hübel underlined that this provision is intended to address membership applications of very narrow, single issue organisations without an interest in overall public health policy development. He explained that current EUHPF members need to go through the renewal process which is intended to be launched during 2009.

ASPHER, EHN and AAE had drafting suggestions that were added to the text.

Mr. Hübel concluded that there was general support for the document. The final text will be circulated to members and published on the EUHPF website.

FUTURE WORK OF THE EU HEALTH POLICY FORUM

1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2. INPUT INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HEALTH STRATEGY

3. DRAFT RESOLUTION TO THE EUHPF : CIVIL SOCIETY AND REGIONAL ROLE IN THE HEALTH POLICY STRATEGY

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| Documents: | EUHPF Strategic Priorities – WG STEP - final, PowerPoint Presentation on Strategic Priorities, EUHPF Draft Resolution |
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1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Ms. Kosinska from EPHA presented the draft EUHPF Strategic Priorities document on behalf of the working group on Strategic Priorities (WG STEP). The document identified the following strategic priorities areas :

- Economic change: health as an economic driver and cost,
- Demographic change: its impact on health systems and health needs
- Environmental change: its impact on organisation of health services and impact on health
- Social change and public health
- Technological change: innovation and development

Cross-cutting themes include:

- Health related rights of citizens
- Health inequalities within and between EU member states.
- Better integration of research into policy-making

The specific areas of interest that arise from the Strategic Priorities:

- Formal competences of the EU institutions, institutional setup and budgetary provisions for health related activities;
- Progress of implementation of the EU Health Strategy;
- Implementation of the Public Health Programme (2003-2008) and programming for the Second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health (2009-2013);
- Integration of health in: Social and employment policy, Economic development (growth and competitiveness) policy, Internal market, Regional cohesion policy, Agriculture and rural development policy, Consumer protection, Environment, Transport, Research, Education, Information and Society, Neighbourhood and Development Aid policies, Tax, Budget
- Principles of health promotion and disease prevention;
- Access to health information, health education and health literacy;
- Patients safety and quality of care;
- Potential and conditions for effective use of new technologies in health sector.

Recommendations for Specific Priorities for period 2009-10:

- The Lisbon strategy - including the revision of the 'jobs and growth' priorities; the impact of the Lisbon strategy on health inequalities and recommendations for a post-Lisbon strategy
- Better regulation - including the review of impact assessments
- Specific EUHPF response to the White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change
- The implementation of the Health Strategy

In general the draft document was well received by the EUHPF members. Several points were raised during the discussion:

- EUPHA proposed that EUHPF members should work together between meetings by forming specific working groups;
- EURORDIS, IAPO, ECPC, EFPIA proposed to include a statement on the impact of economic crisis on Health sector;
- WCPT stressed the importance of work at national level on health prevention issues and suggested to keep the document as "live" document that can be easily adapted to changing circumstances;
- EPF – in case of urgent issues there should be a mechanism to respond rapidly (ad hoc working groups led by 1-2 organisations and supported by secretariat);
- ASPHER proposed to prepare a work plan with deadlines and guidelines;
- HAI considers important to weight priorities to identify most important ones;
- EuroHealthNet asked for completion of the text as soon as possible and suggested to concentrate on the quality of work rather than quantity.
- ASPHER proposes to add 'building health professional's capacity' as another specific area of interest.

The EUHPF agreed on the main 5 strategic priorities. In particular, the economic crisis and climate change were highlighted as key issues. In order to finalise the text the EUHPF members were asked to send their written comments by 15 February to the EUHPF secretariat. The WG STEP will edit and finalise a second draft which will then be approved later either by written procedure, and if more profound discussion is required, at the next meeting. Following approval of the final version actions and timeline will be proposed.

Within the discussion on strategic priorities members raised their concern about the impact of the economic crisis on health and health systems. In order to react as rapidly as possible, members agreed to draft a short text and statement on this issue during lunchtime. Several members contributed to the draft which was presented to participants in the afternoon. Following discussion, members agreed that the secretariat will re-circulate an amended draft version by e-mail to all members. Comments should then be sent to the secretariat by 5 February. The final document which will take into account all comments and contributions will be circulated afterwards for adoption in a written procedure. EUHPF members are requested to circulate the adopted document to their member organisations and other relevant organisations and/or authorities.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTH STRATEGY

Mr. Merkel presented an overview of the work of the Council Working Group at Senior Level. In terms of setting priorities, the group agreed that they would adopt a multi-annual programme for next 2-3 years at the next meeting of the Group which will take place in May. At this meeting the working methods will be defined in line with the multi-annual work programme. The Commission services are developing a review of what has been done and what will need to be done in future in the field of health. EUHPF members were invited to support this process in specific areas of expertise. The Commission services will indicate how this input can best be made.

During the discussion several members asked the Commission to provide EUHPF members with relevant information regarding the Council Working Group to be able to contribute effectively. Members also emphasized the need for active involvement of EUHPF in preparation of discussion documents for the Council Working Group.

3. DRAFT RESOLUTION TO EUHPF

Mr. Needle, on behalf of EuroHealthNet and IUPHE, presented a proposal for a resolution in relation to the implementation of the new EU Health Strategy to the EUHPF. The resolution emphasizes the need for cooperation between different actors in the implementation of the EU Health Strategy and calls for greater involvement of the civil society organizations. During the discussion all members welcomed the draft presented by Mr Needle. It was felt that the text was well drafted and that there is no need for further amendments. The secretariat was asked to transfer the document to all EU institutions and to publish it on the EU HPF website.

Afternoon session

COMMISSION UPDATE ON KEY POLICIES

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| Documents: | Roadmap: EU platform for Action on Cancer Roadmap: Proposal for Commission initiative on Alzheimer Roadmap: Reducing Health inequalities in the EU Roadmap: Communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and neighbourhood – strategy and second action plan 2010-2014 PowerPoint presentation: Communication on Solidarity in Health – Reducing Health inequalities in the EU PowerPoint presentation: Communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and the neighbourhood – strategy and second action plan (2010 – 2014) PowerPoint presentation: Europe for Patients; |
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Officials from DG SANCO informed members on important initiatives in the Commission Legislative Work Programme 2009.

- **EU Platform for Action on Cancer**

Mr. Fahy, Head of Unit, SANCO/C/2, presented the Platform for Action on Cancer. This initiative aims to support the Member States in their effort to tackle cancer by providing a framework for identifying and sharing information, capacity and expertise in cancer prevention and control, and by engaging relevant stakeholders across the EU in a collective effort. The initiative would address health information, primary and secondary prevention, and priorities for cancer research. Mr. Fahy invited the participants to send written comments.

In the discussion several organisations (EUMS, EUROPADONA, ASPHER, ECPC) welcomed this initiative and asked questions on possibility of stakeholders' engagement, explanation of different options in the roadmap document. Organisations stressed the importance of screening programmes and guidelines at national level and will send contributions in writing directly to C/2.

- **Proposal for a Commission initiative on Alzheimer**

Mr. Fahy also presented the initiative on Alzheimer's and its objectives to improve knowledge and share best practices between Member States how to respond to the challenge. The initiative will address:

1. better understanding of the disease (research)
2. long-term care issues (financing)
3. medical aspects (difficulty to diagnose and treat)

During the discussion EUPHA stressed that neurodegenerative diseases have a significant impact on migration of care workers in EU; MHE commented that in practice there is still confusion between Alzheimer and the mental health agenda and WCPT informed that there are many studies on the impact of Alzheimer disease, concluding that economic and social impact is high.

- **Communication on Solidarity in Health: Reducing Health inequalities in the EU**

On the basis of the roadmap of the communication, Mr. Price from SANCO C/4 presented the current status and timetable of this initiative.

The discussion around this issue included in particular the following:

- Participants strongly welcomed the Commission initiative to bring forward a communication on health inequalities.
- The ideas for further work on indicators and measurement of health inequalities mentioned in the roadmap would be useful. More work should be done to encourage and support countries which had not yet carried out any analyses on the distribution of health by area and by social group to do so.
- Targets at European level would be an excellent idea to demonstrate the strength of commitment and to stimulate activity. The OMC seems to be one suitable tool.
- Focus on health investment and improvement of services is welcome. However, basing a reference to inequalities on the number of scanners in a given Member States

does not seem very relevant. Health care does have a role in reducing inequalities in health but the emphasis should be on good quality primary care.

- The idea of health equity impact assessment of existing and planned policies was strongly supported. There are examples of policies, such as food labelling which seem to particularly cater for the literate middle classes. Ways need to be found to put the needs of those with the greatest health needs at the forefront of policy development.
- More work is needed to involve disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in contributing to policy development which affects them. This is recognized as an issue by many member organizations of the EU Health Policy Forum. EU support in this area could perhaps be provided through the health programme and by a more innovative approach to dialogue with citizens on policies in order to try and engage with a wider section of the population.
- Examples of policies and initiatives which have made an impact on health inequalities should be mentioned.
- EU should encourage exchange of best practices, but also follow-up and monitor their implementation.
- The EU work on health literacy, e.g. to increase patient safety, is relevant and should provide an input to the development of the Communication.
- The Regional dimension is very important. The issue of the large differences in health between EU regions is of major concern to regions. Further work by the EU to support regions to improve health and address health inequalities both directly through the structural funds and by encouraging exchange of good practice via networking and other arrangements, would be very welcome.

Next steps: A written request for consultation on the health inequalities communication will be sent to all organizations represented in the EU Health Policy Forum in early February. For further questions and contributions, members could contact Charles Price in Sanco/C/4.

- **Communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and the neighbourhood – strategy and second action plan (2010 - 2014)**

Mr. Hübel presented the status and timetable for the draft communication on HIV/AIDS as a follow up of the 2005 communication. The objective is to further strengthen co-ordination among Member States and involve neighbouring countries, facilitate exchange of information implement measures to control HIV infections.

During the discussion members commented that the future communication should be specific about actions related to different target groups and should also address co-infections. Members were invited to submit their written contributions and/or additional questions directly to Sanco/C/4.

- **Europe for Patients campaign: next steps**

Ms Matthews new SANCO media officer for health issues, provided an update on the Europe for Patients Campaign that was launched in September 2008 by Commissioner Vassiliou. The campaign should be seen as an umbrella activity for the following 10 policy initiatives in the field of public health:

Initiatives already adopted in 2008:

- **Cross-border healthcare:** Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (Adopted 2/7/08)
- **Rare diseases:** Commission Communication and Council Recommendation (Adopted 11/11/08)
- **Organs:** Directive on setting standards for quality and safety of human organs intended for transplantation; an Action Plan on Organ Donation and Transplantation (Adopted 8/12)
- **Health Workforce:** Green paper (Adopted 10/12/08)
- **Patient safety:** Commission Communication and Council Recommendation on patient safety and quality of health services including the prevention and control of healthcare associated infections (adopted 15/12/08)
- **Cancer:** Report on implementation of the Cancer Screening Recommendation of 2003 (adopted 22/12/08 – press launch 22/01/09)

Further initiatives to be adopted in 2009:

- **Cancer: European Partnership for action against cancer** (CLWP 2009)
- **Seasonal flu vaccination:** Council Recommendation
- **Prudent use of antibiotics:** 2nd report on the implementation of the Council Recommendation
- **Mental health:** Conferences on priority areas from the mental health pact
- **Childhood immunisation:** Council recommendation on the cross-border aspects (CLWP 2009)

In order to receive feedback on the campaign, members were invited to send their comments and remarks directly to Maya Matthews. In case additional information is needed she pointed out that members could also find all relevant details at the Europe for Patients campaign website published on the EU Health portal:

http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/europe_for_patients/index_en.htm

IMPORTANT COMMUNICATIONS BY MEMBERS

HAI (HEALTH ACTION INTERNATIONAL)

HAI informed about a new paper on access to medicines published on their web:

<http://www.haiweb.org>

EPHA (EUROPEAN PUBLIC HEALTH ALLIANCE)

EPHA informed participants about the follow up of the Budget Review. EPHA invited other organisations to co-operate on drafting a paper on the subject. .

EHMA (EUROPEAN HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION)

EHMA informed on their conference in June in Insbruck.: <http://www.ehma.org>

CLOSING OF THE MEETING

Mr Hübel closed the meeting with a brief summary of the discussion. He thanked all for their participation in the discussions and announced that the next meetings would be held on 14 May and 16 October 2009.

EU HEALTH POLICY FORUM

Brussels, 21 January 2009

List of participants

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| AAE | Aids Action Europe | Harry Wizthum |
| AER | Assembly of European Regions | Ourania Georgoutsakou |
| AESGP | Association of the European Self-Medication Industry | Luca Battistini |
| AIM | Association Internationale de la Mutualité | Philippe Swennen |
| ASPHER | Association of Schools of Public health in the European Regions | Chris Birt |
| ASPHER | Association of Schools of Public health in the European Regions | Robert Otok |
| ASPHER | Association of Schools of Public health in the European Regions | Stojgniew Jacek Sitko |
| BEUC | Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs / European Consumer's Organisation | Ilaria Passarani |
| CED | Council of European Dentists | Claudia Ritter |
| CED | Council of European Dentists | Nina Bernot |
| EATG | European AIDS Treatment Group | Ana Lucia Cardoso |
| ECH | European Committee for Homeopathy | Ton Nicolai |
| ECPC | European Cancer Patient Coalition | Hildrun Sundseth |
| EFA | European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients | Susanna Palkonen |
| EFN | European Federation of Nurses Associations | Andreas Xyrichis |
| EFN | European Federation of Nurses Associations | Ecaterina Gulie |
| EFPIA | European Federation of Pharmaceutal Industries and Associations | Brendan Barnes |
| EFPIA | European Federation of Pharmaceutal Industries and Associations | Erica Poot |
| EHMA | European Health Management Association | Elisabeth Jelfs |
| EHN | European Heart Network | Susanne Logstrup |
| EMA | European Midwives Association | Deidre Daly |
| EPF | European Patient's Forum | Nicola Bedlington |
| EPHA | European Public Health Alliance | Monika Kosinska |
| ESIP | European Social Insurance Platform | Chris Dawson |
| ESIP | European Social Insurance Platform | Ilka Woelfle |
| ESIP | European Social Insurance Platform | Julia Schröder |
| EUMS | European Union of Medical Specialists | Frederic Destrebecq |
| EUPHA | European Public Health Association | Mark McCarthy |
| EuroHealthNet | European Network of Health Promotion Agencies | Clive Needle |
| EuroHealthNet | European Network of Health Promotion Agencies | Simona de Lisi |
| Europa Donna | European Breast Cancer Coalition | Christine Murphy- Whyte |
| EURORDIS | European organisation for Rare Diseases | Flaminia Macchia |
| GIRP | The European Association of Pharmaceutical Full-line Wholesalers | Martin Fitzgerald |
| GIRP | The European Association of Pharmaceutical Full-line Wholesalers | Monika Dereque-Pois |
| HAI | Health Action International Europe | TeresaLeonardo Alves |

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| HOPE | European Hospital and Healthcare Federation | Karolina Hanslik |
| HOPE | European Hospital and Healthcare Federation | Pascal Garel |
| IAPO | International Alliance of Patient's Organisations | Rod Mitchell |
| IPPFEN | International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network | Irene Donadio |
| MHE | Mental Health Europe | Mariantonietta Fresu |
| PGEU | Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union | Patricia Munoz |
| WCPT | World Confederation for Physical Therapy (European Region) | David Gorria |
| WCPT | World Confederation for Physical Therapy (European Region) | Roland Craps |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/4 | Michael Hübel |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/4 | Walter Baer |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/2 | Nick Fahy |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/5 | Bernard Merkel |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/4 | Charles Price |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/5 | Christoph Hofbeck |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/5 | Maya Matthews |
| EC | European Commission, DG SANCO/C/5 | Alexandra Walters |
| EUHPF | Secretariat | Iva Misigova Shona Rose Jo Jewell |