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EU

ECDC Director Speaks on Reinforcing Trust, Key Role of Doctors, Healthcare Workers to Reach EU Vaccination Goals

"The role of doctors and healthcare workers in direct contact with parents and children is paramount," said ECDC Director Dr. Marc Sprenger at the World Health Summit in Berlin, Germany. Speaking at a panel on 'Bridging Health Gaps with Vaccines', Dr. Sprenger emphasised that "effective communication (to parents) is important to reinforce trust. Here the support of paediatricians, family practitioners and nurses is essential."

He presented the situation of measles in Europe. "Measles is re-emerging in Europe – and in a dramatic way. In 2010 alone, more than 30,000 cases of measles were reported in the EU." He added that some people think that it is a 'fairly harmless disease.' But statistics from the ECDC European monthly measles monitoring report states that there are eight measles-related deaths and 24 acute measles encephalitis in EU countries from this year alone. In addition, around 25 percent of those affected with measles need hospitalisation, due to complications such as pneumonia and high fever in young children.

ECDC is committed to support doctors and healthcare workers with effective communication tools, to provide expert advice and methods regarding how to monitor and assess immunisation programmes. To this end, the ECDC will organise workshops for Member States to share experiences and best practices and provide data for action.

The World Health Summit was held from 23-26 October 2011 in Berlin.

For more information, please visit: www.worldhealthsummit.org

Health Information Seeking Behaviour on the Web

Eight out of every ten physicians report experience of patients presenting printed internet-sourced health information at visits, which suggests a new dynamic in the traditional doctor–patient relationship. This is one of the findings of the literature review on health informationseeking behaviour on the web that ECDC published recently.

The purpose of the review is to provide an overview of online health information- seeking behaviour by adults from the perspective of both the health consumer and the health professional. Research shows that, although they have difficulty of identifying and filtering the most useful, accurate and credible sources, the health professionals' use of the internet to obtain health and medical information has increased.

As for the online health consumer, they tend to be more educated, earn more, and have high-speed internet access at home and at work. The literature review also shows that women are more likely than men to search for health information.

The report concludes by outlining the implications for health communication research in Europe and the identification of gaps and the focus for further research.

The literature review, one in a series of 'Insights into health communication' on the prevention and control of communicable disease in the European context, focuses on research published from 2006 to 2010 in English language.

For more information, please visit: http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/Forms/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?ID=753

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