
Volume 12, Issue 2 / 2010 - News

EU News

EU Presidency and Ministers Provide Direction for E-Health

Recognising the efforts that brought EU policy on e-health to the present, EU Ministers and the Spanish Presidency have recommended a plan for the future.

In the Ministerial Declaration of European Cooperation on ehealth, a detailed framework was set forth in order to achieve the overall objective of enhancing quality and sustainability of healthcare professionals and society. The main points addressed in the declaration included:

Political and strategic commitment both at the regional and national level, encouraging collaboration with States outside the EU;

Building confidence and acceptance, focusing on all stakeholders (patients, health providers, authorities and government);

Bringing legal and ethical clarity and ensuring protection of personal health data;

Solving interoperability issues, specifically legal, regulatory and organisational barriers to e-health; and

Linking e-health policy to competitiveness, innovation and research as well as to cohesion and inclusion policies.

In conclusion, the ministers and representatives responsible for e-health encouraged policy coordination among the various areas of e-health as well as stronger synergies within policy areas like competition, research and regional development. They stressed involving all stakeholders in strategic planning, validation and implementation of ehealth solutions and specifically, including e-health within the framework of the European Digital Agenda. Most importantly, they encourage using e-health solutions to improve patient benefits, welcoming more research, innovation and deployment.

In a recent communication, the Spanish Presidency proposed four goals for e-health as part of a wide strategic framework and corresponding action plan:

Introduce a global vision for an e-health policy totally integrated in the post 2010 European Agenda;

Drive a new E-Health Action Plan, facing the new

European challenges;

Develop and promote ministerial agreements, in particular regarding integration of e-health in community policy; and

Implement reinforced government.

The Action Plan will be directed at the current challenges in

European healthcare: crises, ageing populations, sustainability

and efficiency in the public sector, and economic and social

inclusion. The Spanish Presidency hopes to integrate ehealth

policy in the post 2010 European Agenda, contributing

to its main goals of economic recovery, growth and employment

and economic, social and territorial cohesion.

For more information, please visit: www.ehealthspain.eu

Commissioner for Development Addresses Global Health MDGs

At the Cross Europe Conference, EU Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs, addressed the progress made toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the work still needed to be done.

© For personal and private use only. Reproduction must be permitted by the copyright holder. Email to copyright@mindbyte.eu.

In his keynote address at the conference titled “Delivering the Right to Health with the Health Millennium Development Goals,” Piebalgs offered an overall perspective of past, present and future actions toward the MDGs. The MDG framework focuses on three main priorities: mortality of children under five years old; maternal mortality; and the impact of major pandemics, such as HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Piebalgs reported that progress towards health-related MDGs remains totally insufficient, giving examples of the little and seemingly no changes in child and maternal mortality, respectively, in sub-Saharan Africa. Piebalgs did recognise the positive changes, citing the increase in the direct aid to health since 2000 by a factor of four, now amounting to 16 billion euro a year. This increase has enabled access to HIV/AIDS treatment to three million people in developing countries.

Piebalgs then outlined four priority areas in the EU's future commitment to global health challenges: the challenge of governance, the challenge of coherence of policies; the challenge of knowledge; and the challenge of health coverage. Specifically on health coverage, Piebalg addressed the prioritisation of aid commitments, the fragmentation of the health sector, and the division of labour. These priorities will be addressed in a future Commission Communication on the EU's role in Global Health, in agreement with the Spanish Presidency.

The Cross-Europe Conference for Global Health took place on 2 March in Brussels. The day included panel discussions including the EU Presidencies Panel consisting of the EU Presidency of Spain and the upcoming EU Presidencies, Belgium and Hungary, and the EU Institutions panel with representation from the three EU Institutions.

For more information, please visit: www.actionforglobalhealth.eu

Published on : Sun, 1 Aug 2010