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European Commission's HEIDI Still Work in Progress

Heidi (Health in Europe: Information and Data Interface) is a new website and comprehensive search tool for European health information and data. Launched by the European Commission, DG Health and Consumers on October 6th 2010, it contains information about the public's state of health, determinants, diseases, health systems, trends, institutional and policy aspects.

The site is maintained by the European Commission but the information is up-dated by European health experts. The two-way tool allows approved experts, health authorities and various health institutions from within the EU to constantly update and adjust its content with relevant information. It will target policy makers, health professionals, academics and nongovernmental organisations, however anyone online will have access.

Heidi aims to provide comparable information at EU level. However, it is important to know that there are limitations for making such comparisons. Ideally, for health-related information to be useful at European level, it should be collected on a harmonised basis covering all Member States. But due to cultural, technical, political and social factors, definitions and measurement of key indicators and data coverage vary across countries. Although cross-country comparisons should be interpreted with some caution, information which is more geographically limited or less harmonised can nevertheless still be useful. The initial content in Heidi was based on the Eugloreh report – "The Report on the Status of Health in the European Union" – a project which was supported by the EU Public Health Programme.

The Eugloreh benefited from the collaboration of health authorities or institutions from all EU Member States, Croatia, Turkey, Iceland and Norway, and of major intergovernmental, international and European organisations and agencies. Moreover, more than 170 European experts provided their knowledge and analysis for the report. The three year Eugloreh project was co-financed in 2005 by the Commission, DG Health and Consumers under the Public Health Programme 2003-2008.

Although the technical system is ready, Heidi is still being developed as the content still needs to be refined and made more user-friendly. The full version of the site is expected next year.

For more information, please visit :

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/sanco/heidi/index.php/Main_Page

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