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Healthcare Managers and Development Tools for Organisations



It would be an understatement to say that European hospitals are currently facing a number of challenges. Beyond the particularities and specific characteristics of each EU member state, questions are arising everywhere regarding the exact role of hospitals, their ability to meet patient expectations, their appeal in a highly competitive environment, changing financing structures, etc. Despite the apparent dissimilarity of these issues, they all have one thing in common: they call into question the establishments' organisation and their ability to continue moving forward.

More than any other institution, hospitals are perpetually evolving entities that must constantly adapt to their environment, improve their efficiency and review their organisation in order to provide care that is most suited to the needs of their patients.

This task is, of course, at the heart of the job of hospital managers, who have many tools available to aid them in accomplishing this mission of optimising hospital organisation.

These tools and methods have taken many shapes and sizes and differing outcomes depending on the time period and the country. However, accreditation, and more generally, quality assessment, has become a critical and central approach in all member states. In this context, the articles included in this new issue of *(E)-Hospital* will enable every reader to take notice of the groundbreaking nature of today's approaches to external quality assessment and evaluation in Europe, which have demonstrated their power, positive character and ability to make organisations more efficient everywhere.

In keeping with its mission of contributing to health in Europe, EAHM chose to go even further in addressing accreditation systems and it has drawn up the framework of what could become a European accreditation model.

The association's next seminar, which will take place on 16 November in Düsseldorf, will thus provide hospital managers with the opportunity to discuss accreditation and quality assessment systems and, ultimately, consider the conditions for a harmonised European approach on the subject. Without replacing of existing systems or negating the particularities of each member state, such an approach would make it possible to define a qualitative European standard accepted by all and visible to patients.

Of course, the move towards accreditation is not the only tool available to healthcare managers to help improve their organisation, and in that sense new technology offers innovative possibilities and endless opportunities for development. This is the case in particular for the capacity planning method, which will undoubtedly have promising uses for hospitals and which *(E)-Hospital* is promoting today.

Clearly, the challenges that hospitals face are expansive, but so are the solutions, and hospital managers will undoubtedly demonstrate their ability to move forward and work together. In that regard, EAHM is fulfilling its role now more than ever as an influential think tank. It will continue its efforts to develop new European visions in the field of healthcare.

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