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Your Relevant Directorate-Generals and Commissioners

Author

Helicia Herman

Editor European Affairs

Correspondence

europa@emceurope.com

Helicia Herman overviews the European Commission Directorate-Generals, active in policies relevant to ICU Managers and presents examples of their legislation, activities and contact details.

DG Enterprise & Industry Commissioner Günter Verheugen

Relevant to intensive care, this DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- pharmaceuticals
- medical devices
- tissue engineering

Examples of EU legislation in these fields:

- The proposal for a regulation on medicines for children (see also ICU Management Summer 2005).
- A regulatory framework on human tissue engineered products, currently in process
- With regards to medical devices, the European Community's involvement concerns mainly the regulatory framework for market access, international trade relations and regulatory convergence, and the competitiveness of industry. In May this year the Commission started a public consultation process to improve public health and safety of medical devices.

Correspondence European Commission, Enterprise DG, Rue

de la Loi 200, B - 1049 Brussels, Belgium

DG Health and Consumer Protection (known as DG "SANCO") Commissioner Markos Kyprianou

Relevant to intensive care, this DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- Public health: including health information, threats to health, health determinants and the EU public health programme including possible funding opportunities for projects in the field
- Patient mobility issues

Examples of EU legislation in these fields:

- A decision in December 2004 to set up the 'Executive Agency for the Public Health Programme', for the management of Community action in the field of public health
- Recent legislation aiming to further the development of a variety of communicable disease surveillance networks and early warning and rapid response systems, i.e. setting up the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

- Legislation to address the problems of antimicrobial resistance and bioterrorism, and develop strategies for preventing and responding to communicable disease (e.g. influenza preparedness and protection against intentional epidemics) and non-communicable disease threats
- Directives in the field of quality and safety of substances of human origin (e.g. blood, tissues and cells, and organs), in order to prevent the transmission of pathogens by these therapeutic materials.

Correspondence European Commission, DG Health and Consumer Protection, Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

DG Employment and Social affairs and Equal Opportunities Commissioner Vladimir Spidla

Relevant to intensive care, this DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- Labour law and work organisation
- Health and safety at work
- Free movement of workers
- Condition of social security schemes
- Social dialogue
- Corporate social responsibility

Examples of EU legislation in these fields:

- The directive concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, currently in revision
- Legislation on the European Health Insurance Card, launched in June 2004
- Directives on workplaces in general and work equipment in particular
- A directive on working conditions for temporary workers
- A directive on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States.

Correspondence European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Rue Joseph II 37, B- 1049 Brussels, Belgium

DG Internal Market Commissioner Charlie McCreevy

Relevant to intensive care, this DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- Patient mobility issues
- Free movement of persons, i.e. mutual recognition of professional qualifications, patient mobility
- Free movement of services
- Public procurement

Examples of EU legislation in these fields:

- A draft directive on the liberalisation of services in the internal market, proposed in January 2004 and currently in the legislative pipeline
- A directive relating to the recognition of professional qualifications, adopted on June 6th 2005
- A directive on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts in force since April 2004.

Correspondence European Commission, Directorate General for the Internal Market, Rue de la Loi 200, B - 1049 Brussels, Belgium

DG Information Society Commissioner Viviane Reding

Relevant to intensive care, this DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- eHealth developments in the European Union

Examples of EU activities in these fields:

- Europe 2005 action plan
- Annual Conferences on eHealth
- Political action calling on governments and the private sector to make better use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in Europe's healthcare system

Correspondence European Commission, DG Information Society, BU 24 0/41, Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

DG Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik

This DG is responsible for EU policy on:

- Research and technological development, thereby contributing to the international competitiveness of European industry
- The coordination of European research activities with those carried out at the level of the Member States
- Promoting a better understanding of the role of science in modern societies and stimulating a public debate about research-related issues at European level. Examples of EU activities in these fields:
 - A European Research framework programme (the 7th programme currently in preparation due to start in 2007). The programme helps to organise and financially support cooperation between universities, research centres and industries
 - the creation of a European Research Area which is regrouping all Community supports for the better coordination of research activities and the convergence of research and innovation policies, at national and EU levels.

Correspondence European Commission, DG Research, SDME 7/15, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

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