



Health First Europe demands concrete actions for rapid uptake of e-Health

New publication highlights recommendations

8 February 2011 - Health First Europe released yesterday its publication entitled “E-Quality in E-Health” demanding action amongst policymakers and stakeholders to quickly advance patient access to e-Health technologies by setting concrete targets for Member States on the reimbursement of payments and the access to innovative technologies. Authors of the publication declared that EU institutional involvement must determine quantitative objectives for access in order to encourage the migration of best e-Health practices and increase the ability of patients to utilise the current health technologies.

Launching the publication in the European Parliament under the sponsorship of MEPs Françoise Grossetête (EPP, France) and Milan Cabrnoch (ECR, Czech Republic), the event highlighted how e-Health can empower patients by giving them increased access to innovative technology and the difficulties that still exist at EU and Member State level to make e-Health a reality.

Health First Europe’s call for action challenges policymakers to safeguard the patient as the centre for all e-Health policy by establishing benchmarks for Member States in the areas of patient access to e-health technologies and payment reimbursements.

Mr. John Bowis, Health First Europe Honorary President, discussed the importance of e-Health for increasing the efficiency of healthcare systems but cited, “Challenges are still faced by Member States with regards to increasing access to e-Health. E-Health has been promoted as a silver bullet for healthcare systems but the reality is that such innovation is only slowly making its way to patient care.”

Health First Europe Patron Mr. David Byrne, former EU Health and Consumer Protection Commissioner, commented on the increasing importance of e-Health on the European agenda:

“Policymakers must continue to play a role in ensuring that the recommendations put forward in this publication are generated into discernable results for patients. Ensuring access of patients to e-Health should be the ultimate goal of e-Health policy. The Commission needs to establish a transparent benchmark on current e-Health applications and the actual use of patients in order to set a tangible target for Member States to achieve better patient accessibility.”

Mr. Bowis then called on the EU institutions to accelerate access to e-Health for patients and encouraged Member States to develop e-Health strategies to ensure ease of implementation for usability and accessibility for both patients and professionals. He also asked, “Do we know where e-health is being administered for chronic conditions? How do we export that model to areas without access? Are budgets being assembled to increase innovation uptake? Are healthcare workers being trained in new systems of innovation? All of these questions remain unanswered. ”

“E-Quality in E-Health” featured concrete stakeholder recommendations for ensuring that the uptake of e-Health is rapidly increased in order to benefit the patient. The recommendations put forward include:

- EU institutions must investigate inadequate reimbursement and funding systems in Member States through comparative data studies
- Policymakers must determine targets for access of e-Health usage
- Member States must develop e-Health strategies to monitor e-health uptake and access for patients

Key contributors to the publication: MEP Dr. Milan Cabrnoch (ECR, Czech Republic); Dr. Andrzej Jan Rys (Director Public Health and Risk Assessment Unit, DG SANCO, European Commission); David Lloyd Williams (Representative European Health Telematics Association).

[To access the Health First Europe publication click HERE.](#)

About Health First Europe:

Health First Europe is a non-profit, non-commercial alliance of patients, healthcare workers, academics and healthcare experts and the medical technology industry.

We aim to ensure that equitable access to modern, innovative and reliable medical technology and healthcare is regarded as a vital investment in the future of Europe. We call for truly patient-centred healthcare and believe that every European citizen should benefit from the best medical treatments available. www.healthfirsteurope.org

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