

EU should support patients to become managers of their own health

18 December 2013 – To empower citizens to manage their own health, every European citizen should have access to a personalised health management plan including information on prevention and screening. Given that patients will be required to take additional responsibility for their health, Health First Europe today launches its *Statement on Health Literacy*, calling for the EU institutions to provide greater support and encouragement for initiatives aimed at helping citizens to be engaged and informed when making decisions about their health.

Following the adoption of Council Conclusions on the Reflection Process on Modern, Responsive and Sustainable Health Systems, the Member States have agreed to put forward policy actions for patient empowerment. As part of future initiatives, HFE believes that policies should focus on spurring action among citizens to seek trusted and reliable health information. The EU can support the development of health plans that encourage proactive behaviours to facilitate improved health and well-being throughout all stages of life. Future policies must incentivize citizens to keep track of their health and provide accessibility to preventive services (such as screening and diagnostic testing).

Honorary President John Bowis highlighted the importance of personalised health plans, stating:

“The challenges faced by health systems require individuals to be more proactive about their health. In order to encourage greater responsibility, trusted information providers and preventive services will have to be made more accessible. The EU has an important role to play in addressing best practices not only for functional health literacy, but encouraging citizen action.”

Health First Europe believes that the EU is well placed to foster uptake of personal health plans by continuing to promote health literacy, establishing evidence on patient engagement, sharing best practices, championing patient rights and encouraging partnerships to connect citizens with preventive services.

To read Health First Europe’s Statement on Health Literacy, [click here](#).

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