

Update on the Roadmaps for EC/WHO EURO collaboration

Title: Health Systems strengthening

Key elements of the Roadmap:

Develop an evidence-based case for maintaining / increasing / altering composition of investments in health. Improve quality of evidence and knowledge to assist interested countries.

Increase information available on access to health systems for vulnerable people.

Update on the progress made with the implementation of the Roadmap so far (context, main issues, most recent activities, upcoming activities, WHO/EC joint activities, opportunities for WHO/EC collaboration, other partners engaged or to be engaged etc)

Three meetings were held with WHO Europe and European Commission between March 2011 and February 2012 to exchange information on the work done so far and to discuss general principles for further collaboration.

A. Develop evidence-based case of investments in health

The European Commission is supporting Member States in initiating and implementing the reflection process on the sustainability of health systems with the aim to identify effective ways of investing in health, so as to pursue modern, responsive and sustainable health systems.

Five working groups were set up:

- Health in Europe 2020
- Success factors for Structural Funds
- Cost-effective use of medicines
- Integrated care models and better hospital management
- Measuring the effectiveness of health investments

WHO EURO has started work on the strategic road map development, with an initial focus on modern health care delivery systems and the role of hospitals, supported by a dedicated expert workshop held in collaboration with the Belgium Federal Public Health Authority in November 2011. This was followed by an internal expert meeting in January 2012 and supported by a technical report on coordinated health care delivery and role of hospitals in primary care centred health services organized around patients' journey and population needs. Ongoing work is focused on the development of a position paper reflecting coordinated care organized around chronicity and multiple morbidity, which draws from shared country experiences and lessons learned.

Human resources for health (sustainable investments in human resources)

Participation of the EC to Global Meeting of Human Resources for Health Observatories, Lisbon, Portugal, 4-7 July 2011. Participation of WHO Euro in two preparatory meetings for the Joint Action on workforce planning on 22 of June and 19 September 2011.

The EU joint action on workforce forecasting will contribute to the better understanding of professional mobility patterns by building on EU research results to improve data availability on the mobility and migration of health professionals. A possible collaboration with the South-eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN) will be explored, including on the setting up of an Observatory for the Euro Region based on the SEE regional centre for HRH in Moldova.

WHO Euro is developing a roadmap on the implementation of the WHO code in the Euro region.

Health Systems Performance Assessment (HSPA, measuring the effectiveness of investments) 16-17 February 2012, WHO EURO organized the WHO Europe Regional Meeting on HSPA at RIVM with the Dutch Ministry of Health, Sport and Welfare. The objectives of the meeting were to explore the demand for tools to strengthen HSPA, to build a common understanding on the 5 guiding principles of HSPA, to share experience and latest development in performance measurement and discuss a roadmap for collaboration with countries and partner organizations in HSPA in the WHO European region.

B. Information on access to health systems for vulnerable people

Little progress made.

New "Survey on Income and Living Conditions" (SILC) data for 2010 published by Eurostat on unmet medical needs by income group. 2012 Annual Growth Survey mentions need to assess "distributional impacts" from budget reforms in National Reform Programmes by Member States. This should indirectly lead to more available information on social inclusion aspects related to health system reforms.

Major challenges (context, main issues)

Need to proceed with practical implementation of the roadmap and to focus on concrete and achievable results.

Recognition of difficulties to increase availability of information on access to health systems beyond the already existing SILC data collection from Eurostat.

Need to proceed with the implementation of the WHO Code of Practice on the international recruitment of health personnel by improving workforce planning and data collection on migratory flows.

Take into account programmes, data, knowledge, evidence and expertise existing within the EU and in the WHO, thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

Future steps (expected results, suggestions on how to move forward, possible changes of direction required, specific objectives, subthemes to be covered etc)

Integrated care – cooperation in mapping respective activities by WHO and European Commission on integrated care.

Health Economic Evaluation – WHO Europe will carry out a study to identify priorities for a research agenda for the EU on health economic evaluation (in healthcare is used to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient way). Priority areas for further research will be recommended as well as ways and scenarios for the possible implementation of the research agenda by the EU.

Health Systems Performance Assessment – Exchange of information on the WHO programme on health systems performance assessment and the activities carried out by the working group on measuring the effectiveness of health investments, within the scope of the reflection process on the sustainability of health systems. WHO and the European Commission will identify possible areas of collaboration, aiming to maximise the added value and avoid work duplication.

Human resources for health – Regular exchange of information between WHO and European Commission on mutual activities.

Three concrete steps by WHO EURO are: 1) the regional meeting for all 53 National Designated Authorities in 2012 to strengthen capacities to implement and report on the Global Code of Practice; 2) launch of sub-regional Observatory on HRH in Moldova for SEEHN; and 3) piloting of the global guidelines on implementing the Global Code in 3 countries in the WHO European Region.

The European Commission is preparing a feasibility study and an Action Plan on EU health workforce.

Information on access to health systems for vulnerable people – Recognition that both sides need to further consider how to improve analysis of already existing information, with special emphasis on access to primary care.