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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public Health
Health information and Scientific committees

Luxembourg, 13 January 2016
SANTE.C.2

EXPERT GROUP ON HEALTH INFORMATION (EGHI) MEETING
LUXEMBOURG 12 NOVEMBER 2015

SUMMARY REPORT

1. REGISTRATION
2. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Chair, Stefan Schreck, Head of the Health Information and Scientific Committees unit of the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) of the European Commission, welcomed the participants to the meeting of the EGHI. The recently nominated delegates were particularly welcomed, namely Bulgaria, Denmark and Portugal, as well as the attendant representing National Institute for Health Surveillance.

The Chair informed that the presentations and documents would be made available in CIRCABC. The summary report, the list of participants and the presentations, with the agreement of authors, will also be made publicly available on the SANTE website. A document regarding data and privacy protection had been distributed before the meeting and the participants were requested to contact the Commission in case of any objections to publish their names in the list of participants on the SANTE website.

The draft agenda was adopted after that the participants were informed that DG EMPL have had to cancel at the last minute and that the presentation by SANTE D2 on Health Systems Performance Assessment had been moved and linked to point 6.2 (Country specific analysis / Annual report). The participants were also encouraged to raise current national situations related to the refugee crisis when giving update of on-going or planned health information work.

The Chair informed that the second meeting of the 'Task Force on the future of the BRIDGE-Health project and preparing a proposal for setting-up a European Research Infrastructure Consortium on Health Information', was to take place 13 November 2015, and that countries, international organisations and EU projects that earlier expressed interest to participate had been invited; but that membership is kept open.

3. SUMMARY REPORT OF THE LAST MEETING

The summary report of the meeting held on 19 May 2015 was adopted. The final version will be made publicly available on SANTE web site together with the list of participants and available presentations from the meeting.

4. INFORMATION FROM CURRENT PRESIDENCY ON ACTIVITIES RELEVANT FOR HEALTH INFORMATION

Under this new point on the EGHI agenda, Scharel Lehnens gave a presentation on topics with relevance to health information from the Luxemburg presidency, for example in the area of personal medicine, dementia, a new alcohol strategy and current discussions on the role of health in the European Semester.

5. INFORMATION FROM THE EU MEMBER STATES, EEA AND CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

5.1 STATE OF PLAY ON HEALTH INFORMATION IN ALBANIA

Romeo Zegali, Director at the Albanian Ministry of Health gave an overview of Albania's situation in the area of health and health care system. He outlined the current and future challenges of rising health care costs and insurance coverage. Measures have been taken to reduce the level of corruption and there is a strong focus on prevention alongside ensuring health coverage and access to health care.

5.2 E-HEALTH POLICY AND HEALTHDATA.BE IN BELGIUM

Herman van Oyen, Director at the Belgian Scientific Institute of Public Health presented the project healthdata.be, which has been developed to improve reporting effectiveness in Belgian health services. The specific information architecture allows the registration to be made only once which has resulted in reduction of administrative burden and therefore, more time for patients and research, higher quality of care and research and consequently reduction of costs.

5.3 UP-DATES ON THE ON-GOING AND PLANNED HEALTH INFORMATION WORK BY EU MEMBER STATES, EEA, CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

EGHI members reported orally on relevant work in their countries. Some contributions had been received before the meeting and all countries were invited to send written input to the EGHI secretariat after the meeting. Web links of activities that might be interesting for other countries, are welcomed in these reports. The Country reports document is regularly updated and made available in CIRCABC, only accessible to EGHI members.

6. INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

6.1 EU HEALTH INFORMATION INITIATIVE – STATE OF PLAY

The Chair gave updates on the latest developments on the EU Health information initiative. The focus will be on the structure and better governance of the EU indicator system and to reduce the reporting burden for member states.

The consultation process will be extensive and include EGHI in meetings and questionnaire, a wide stakeholder community and a public consultation (via 'Your voice

in Europe') to be carried out early 2016 in order to collect views from citizens and stakeholders. Bilateral consultations with the WHO and OECD will also take place. EGHI members raised the importance to keep countries informed what is expected throughout the consultation process.

6.2 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS / ANNUAL REPORT – 'STATE OF HEALTH IN THE EUROPEAN UNION'

Country-specific analysis is one of the main priorities of the Commission which was introduced to give concrete support for each Member State according to the specific situation of each country. The aim is to identify needs, gaps and possible synergies to better target EU actions as well as exchange good practices. SANTE is working on the analyses for EU countries mainly based on the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) also as a long term goal for reflection of a more rational use of the current funding instruments at EU level in alignment and synergy with national tools.

A health report "The state of health in the European Union" is planned to be published at regular intervals in the future. This publication will provide updated health data and health information based on the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI)..Collaboration with OECD is currently under discussion. The product "[Statistics explained](#)" of Eurostat is aligned with this approach.

Federico Paoli, SANTE Healthcare systems unit gave a presentation on the latest developments of the Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment (HSPA) covering goals and priority areas. The current and future work of the sub-groups on Quality of care and Integrated care was also highlighted.

6.2 PRESENTATION OF THE ECHI DATA TOOL

Fabienne Lefebvre, SANTE Health information and Scientific Committees Unit presented the new [ECHI data tool](#), which contains a range of improved features of selection and download possibilities.

7. INFORMATION FROM THE 'TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE OF THE BRIDGE-HEALTH PROJECT AND PREPARING A POSSIBLE PROPOSAL FOR SETTING-UP A EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE CONSORTIUM ON HEALTH INFORMATION'

The chair of the 'Task Force on the future of the BRIDGE-health project and preparing a possible proposal for setting-up a ERIC on Health Information' Neville Calleja, Director of Health Information and Research directorate of Malta, gave an overview of the work of the Task Force and an outline of the discussion for the following day's meeting. A logistical approach is under discussion and a sub-set group is to be set up for drafting a proposal of the structure of an ERIC. EGHI members were reminded that the membership to the Task Force is being kept open for those wanting to join at a later stage.

8. UPDATES FROM THE COMMISSION SERVICES AND AGENCIES

8.1 SANTE D2

/see 6.2/

8.2 ESTAT

Jakub Hrkal and Anke Weber, DG Eurostat, gave information on recent and current work in the area of health information. The on-line publication has been finalised including facts and figures on health in the EU and health articles. The presentation also covered ongoing work on EHIS; EU-SILC modules preparations and projects on disability statistics; the Annual Joint questionnaire (OECD,ESTAT;WHO) on health care expenditure statistics. Finally the EGHI was informed about the project on Health Expenditures by Diseases & Conditions (HEDiC).

8.3 EMPL

/presentation cancelled/

8.4 RTD

From DG Research and Innovation (RTD) a presentation was given by Sofie Norager on the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative (EHBMI) followed by Julia Schmitz giving updates on other health research activities under the EU Research Framework Programme. The work of the EHBMI is progressing well, the working structure of the initiative has been established and the priority substances for the first year have been identified. The update on other initiatives focused on the current work on big data in health research and personalised medicine.

8.5 JRC

Nicholas Nicholson from the Public Health Policy Support Unit of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) gave an update on JRC's activities on cancer registries and rare diseases. The single portal of cancer data is established and there is continued progress on development and data handling. Information on the status of the current call of cancer data was also given. The EUROCAT (European Surveillance of Congenital Anomalies) and SCPE (Network of population-based registries for the surveillance of cerebral palsy) have been transferred and maintained on the EU Platform on Rare Diseases Registration.

8.6 EMCDDA

The EU agency European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) gave an update on recent activities. João Matias highlighted the adopted conclusions by the Council on the implementation of minimum quality standards in drug demand reduction in the EU. The EMCDDA is disseminating the standards in its portal and will monitor their implementation. There will be an online survey carried out in six countries. The agency is also focusing its work on the challenging location of new drugs with different chemical structures (therefore legal) with future health risks. Mr Matias concluded by giving information on the ESPAD, the largest school survey on substance use, carried out every four years

(collection 2015) for which EMCDDA have a coordinating role feeding into EU strategies in drugs and alcohol.

8.7 CHAFAEA

Guy d'Argent of The Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) gave a short update on the 2015 call results and information on the specific call on the refugees' crisis that had recently been published; (amendment to the 2015 Work Programme) "Support to Member States under particular migratory pressure in their response to health related challenges".

9. UPDATES FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

9.1 OECD

Gaëtan Lafortune, gave an overview of activities and strategic directions for OECD work on health statistics. The presentation focused on the Health Information Network High-Level Reflection Group on Health Statistics, the OECD strategy on how to strengthening health data governance and other work on prevention and health system. The release of Health at a Glance 2015 (world edition) was also presented as well as other recent OECD publications.

9.2 WHO-EURO

Ivo Rakovac, the Regional office for Europe of WHO gave updates on health information activities. The presentation contained an overview of recent developments related to the European Health Information Initiative (EHII) and feedback from meetings, e.g. Regional Committee for Europe where discussions on health information took place as well as information on the Small Countries Health Information Network convened during the Regional Committee meeting.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair thanked all participants and the speakers in particular. He concluded by saying that the next regular EGHI meeting will take place 11 May 2016 and that invitations would be sent in due course.