



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health, country knowledge, crisis management

**Health programme and chronic diseases**

### Flash report

## Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases

27 July 2020

The Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases (SGPP) held a virtual meeting to collect views from Member States on the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan to aid in its development and implementation as well as to facilitate collaboration and engagement of Member States and the European Commission in order to mutually support the fight against cancer, considering the EU added value. Representatives of 21 Member States and Norway attended the meeting together with a number of Commission services and agencies<sup>1</sup>.

### Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and Mission on Cancer

Participants were informed about recent developments concerning the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan, including its timeline and planned adoption for Q4 2020. Members were also updated on the preparations for the proposed Horizon Europe Mission on Cancer, where the Cancer Mission Board will also function as a Scientific Advisory Group for the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. Members were then updated on activities related to cancer in the European Parliament (EP) with the newly established EP Cancer Committee and the informal EP Challenge Cancer Intergroup. Moreover, members were informed of the adverse impacts due to Covid-19 that had been identified through stakeholder consultations on cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment in Member States. Some positive outcomes could also be identified, such as a willingness to embrace new technologies and improved access to better quality data. Potential sources of funding for the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan were then outlined: a specific objective in the EU4Health Programme, activities under ESF+ to support access to healthcare, in particular by vulnerable groups, capacity building, labour force, ERDF actions to improve health infrastructure and equipment, health research under Horizon Europe, and

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<sup>1</sup> Directorates-General represented included Energy, Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Environment, Research and Innovation, Reform, as well as the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and representatives from a number of EU decentralised and executive agencies such as European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and Consumer, Health and Food Executive Agency.

activities within the Digital Europe Programme and Connecting Europe Facility for creating the digital infrastructure needed for digital health tools.

Next, SGPP members were asked to provide their views both in a survey that was circulated to Member States before the meeting and in a tour de table during the meeting. Member States agreed on the European added value in addressing cancer actions at the EU level; there was also general consensus that there appeared no major gaps in the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan as outlined in the meeting documents and the Better Regulation Roadmap. All four main pillar areas were considered as a high priority, being prevention, early detection and diagnosis, treatment and care, and quality of life for patients and survivors. Among the Member States that expressed their views, the area of prevention especially was reported to be increasing in importance over the next two to five years. Member States also saw particular added value in the cross-cutting theme of knowledge, data and scientific evidence. This was also reflected when addressing specific areas of action, with research and exchange of information and sharing knowledge and best practice being cited as areas where actions at the EU level could make the most difference. Within the four pillars, a number of specific topics were highlighted as suitable for future EU involvement, similarly practical measures for addressing inequalities in access to cancer treatment and care. The national effects of Covid-19 on cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment were identified, as well as the development of mitigation plans, such as reactivating/increasing screening, and treatment and vaccination programmes. The presentation concluded with concrete suggestions from Member States of how they could contribute nationally to the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan. The SGPP members were reminded to submit any additional inputs by 10 August in order to feed discussions at future SGPP meetings.

SGPP members were also consulted on how to work with the European Commission on the plan's implementation in terms of committee structure. Various suggestions were posed, with broad agreement for a sub-group of the SGPP to meet, whilst incorporating expertise from both health and research ministries.

#### Conclusions and Next Steps

It was noted by the European Commission that the discussions in the SGPP are without prejudice to the ongoing inter-institutional governance discussions on the new health programme taking place in the Council and European Parliament.

The meeting was concluded by thanking participants and reminding them of the next meeting, to be held virtually in early September 2020, tentatively 10th.