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The initial meetings of the Steering Committee of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer and of the Working group on cancer plans

(Brussels, 8 December 2010)

Summary Report

Following the political support for EU action against cancer reiterated during the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the initial meeting of the Steering Committee of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer (EPAAC) and the Working Group on National Cancer Plans took place in the Auditorium of the ONSS in Brussels on 8th December. Both meetings were co-chaired by the Head of the Health Information Unit, DG SANCO and Slovenia (leader of the joint action). Also in the future these meetings will be co-chaired by DG SANCO and Slovenia.

1. Steering Committee of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer

Members of the EPAAC Steering Committee were invited to this initial meeting: representatives of Member States, Iceland and Norway, leaders of joint action work packages, representatives of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, WHO and IARC, representatives of patients and industry associations, and EUREGHA representing the European local and regional health authorities.

The purpose of the meeting was to present the overall structure of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer, as well as the role of each core work package of the joint action (both managerial and thematic). The key areas of activities are: Health promotion and prevention, Screening and early diagnosis, Healthcare, Research, Information and Data, and Cancer plans (the latter will be presented during the next Steering Committee). Plans for 2011 were also presented. Participants agreed that the presented work of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer is ambitious and that synergies should be sought between work packages whenever possible.

The work of the EPAAC will be presented in yearly Open forums and communicated through the Virtual Partnership. In addition, each of the three Open forums will specifically focus on two areas of work of the Partnership. The first Open forum, to be held on 14-15 June 2011 in Spain will focus on the following two areas: cancer healthcare and research. Open forums will also be the means for communicating with other stakeholders that are not directly involved in the Partnership. They will not be a repetition of other scientific conferences despite the intention to focus on specific areas

under each of the three conferences; the focus will rather be on the policy and the translation into practice. To clarify this there was some discussion on the content and the necessary clarity in presenting the purpose of the Open forums.

The latest development concerning the Virtual Partnership is that it will be taken over by the leader of the joint action and the intention also is to make the best use of Commission web facilities. More detailed presentation will follow in the next Steering Committee.

During the meeting participants were identifying and suggesting key messages to be communicated about the Partnership. As part of the dissemination strategy the leader of the joint action together with the Commission intends to prepare a common template for presentations to be prepared before the next Steering Committee. This template can be than adjusted to the particular event/needs.

Draft agenda for the meetings to be held on 1-2 March 2011 in Dublin was also presented. The following meetings will take place there: Joint Action Advisory Committee meeting, Joint Action meeting (with associated partners), EPAAC steering Committee and Working group on cancer plans.

In the future Slovenia will be responsible for sending invitations and documents to the Steering Committee members.

Conclusions:

- Participants are invited to present the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer. To this end the common template for presentations will be prepared and presented at the next Steering Committee meeting.
- Any presentation of the Partnership needs to be coordinated with the leader of the joint action – The National Institute of Public Health of Slovenia (partnership.cancer@ivz-rs.si; contact person: Ms Sandra Radoš Krnel). The leader will thus keep the overview of when the European Partnership was presented. In relation to this **any use of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer logo must be previously communicated and agreed upon by the leader of the joint action or the Commission.**
- All participants were invited to contribute information for the table of meetings on cancer-related issues that may be relevant for the European Partnership. Contact: partnership.cancer@ivz-rs.si
- All participants are invited to give by mid-January their input on the content of the 1st Open forum. Contact: partnership.cancer@ivz-rs.si)
- If participants wish to raise any specific issue during the next Steering Committee they are invited to indicate it prior to the meeting to the Commission or to the partnership.cancer@ivz-rs.si

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2. Working group on cancer plans

In the afternoon, the Working Group on national cancer plans met, which includes Member States, Iceland and Norway, the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, WHO and EUREGHA.

Plans and preparations for the work were presented and discussed. The intention of the work is to support Member States, with the aim to reach one of the key objectives in the Commission Communication on the European Partnership for Action against Cancer, namely that all Member States have integrated cancer plans by the end of 2013.

Participants were reminded of the political discussion and support expressed during the informal ministerial meeting during the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The working group will report on its work to the EPAAC Steering Committee. There was some discussion on the importance of the commitment of the nominated representatives of member states that are key links between the Steering Committee and the practical implementation on Member States' level.

Objectives and planned activities were presented. While a basic framework already exists: WHO guidelines, some studies, different national contexts and responsibilities, the challenge will be to identify examples of best practice and to get lessons out of this process that would be helpful to Member States. It is not the intention of this Work Package to instruct Member States what they should do.

All Member States and Norway and Iceland will receive the questionnaire at the beginning of January (sent by the leader of the Work Package: National Institute of Public Health of Slovenia) with the request to respond in three weeks. This questionnaire will provide the overview of the current state of national cancer plans in Member States, Norway and Iceland and the draft report will be presented at the Open Forum in June 2011. The beginning of work on national cancer plans' indicators for the monitoring of their implementation is envisaged for April 2011.

Conclusions:

- Nominated Member States' representatives will receive the questionnaire concerning the national cancer plan around 10 January 2011, with the request to complete it within three weeks.
- This will serve as input for the discussion during the next meeting to be held in Dublin on 2 March 2010.