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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

2 July 2020

The Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases (SGPP), held a virtual meeting, to discuss the implementation of the EU4Health Programme, strategic planning of Horizon Europe, and the preparations of the cancer action plan and the cancer mission. Representatives of 27 Member States, Norway and Iceland attended the meeting together with a number of Commission services and agencies¹.

Implementation plan for the EU4Health Programme

Participants were informed about the EU4Health Programme (2021-2027), including the proposal for a large increase in budget and related increase in ambition and impact compared to the previous health programmes. As the EU4Health Programme is currently a Commission proposal, and is under inter-institutional negotiations, the meeting initiated a discussion on the implementation. A key consideration in this regard is that frontloading which is expected in the first years of the programme. Potentially, over 80% of the budget would be committed in the first four years.

SGPP members were asked to provide their views on two points: how adequate absorption capacity for this new programme could be jointly ensured and whether members considered indirect management to national health institutions as appropriate to address this new health programme. As regards the focus on preparedness and response in the new programme, participants spoke of lessons learned from Covid-19 and consistency in gathering information. The in-action and after-action reviews of public health actions regarding Covid-19 by ECDC were referenced, in order to be systematic in learning lessons across the Member States. There was a suggestion to meet more frequently in order to develop the thinking and strategic input to the identified

¹ 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.

challenges, and to ensure that the Member States will be involved in the planning of future actions from the start of the implementation preparations. It was noted by the Commission that the discussions in the SGPP are without prejudice to the inter-institutional governance discussions on the new programme going on in the Council and European Parliament.

Horizon Europe

Next, the Horizon Europe programme was presented. As there is agreement on content, but not yet on budget, current discussions on the first Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-22 on Cluster Health are taking place with country representatives in the Shadow Programme Committee on Health. During the last months there had been a concerted effort to bring together the health and research communities for joint reflection. SGPP Members were encouraged to liaise with their national counterparts represented in the Shadow Programme Committee to ensure synergies between programmes. During the discussion, the focus was on Partnerships, both institutional and co-funded, and an additional cross-cluster partnership on pandemic preparedness and societal resilience was also briefly introduced. It was noted that SGPP members are encouraged to provide their feedback and advice on the scope and objectives of the two co-funded partnership candidates: the Partnership for Chemicals Risk Assessment and the Partnership on Health and Care Systems Transformation.

Cancer Action Plan and Cancer Mission

A presentation continued on the Europe Beating Cancer Plan, with a focus on the process, then the content. Two public consultations were referenced, one on the Roadmap and the other one, on a public consultation, which aims to gather an opinion of stakeholders on cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care; some 2400 replies had been already received. A targeted consultation with stakeholders will continue during the summer, and the results of all consultations will be published and inform the final development of the EU Cancer Plan later this year. It was also explained that the EU Cancer Plan has strong links with the other Commission priorities, such as the Mission on Cancer, the Green Deal, the Farm to Fork initiative, revision of the European pharmaceutical and chemical strategies, and the development of the European Health Data Space. The SGPP members were asked for input over the next weeks through a questionnaire which is being sent imminently.

Members were also updated on the five missions under Horizon Europe, and specifically the cancer mission, including its timelines. The draft mission outline was explained, including its thirteen recommendations and specific focus on citizen engagement. The SGPP members were invited to liaise with the Member States Sub-group on cancer within the Horizon Europe governance.

Conclusions and Next Steps

The meeting was concluded by thanking participants and reminding them of the next meeting, to be held virtually on 27 July 2020. (to focus on the EU health programme and on the EU cancer plan)