



EFN POSITION STATEMENT ON EU QUALITY & SAFETY STANDARDS

The European Commission decided to expand the terms of reference of the High Level Group on Patient Safety to Quality Standards, as a pro-active strategy to learn from the different national initiatives leading preferably to a European synergy in the field of patient safety and quality standards as set out in Article 5 of the European Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare.

While healthcare remains within the prerogatives of Member States, an EU convergence of strategies on health care quality and patient safety is needed. Therefore, the EFN welcomes DG SANCO initiatives on quality and safety standards.

In order to promote quality and safety improvements in all settings of care, the EFN argues for the following initiatives:

1. Setting up a European Network of Quality and Safety Standards to develop clear and transparent principles and criteria for EU Quality and Safety Standards as well as good practices in Quality of Care and Patient Safety;
2. Engage patients and health professionals in the development, adoption and implementation of these principles and criteria as a prerequisite;
3. Making known at the European level to the various players and the public the EU principles and criteria guiding the development of National quality and safety standards;
4. Agree on a standard dataset to enable benchmarking nationally and internationally of nursing contribution;
5. It is essential within the spirit of the European Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare that synergies emerge between Member States Quality and Safety Standards to reduce inequalities and increase accessibility to high quality and safe care;
6. Development of quality and safety standards should be undertaken on a multidisciplinary scientific basis, emphasizing development of nursing sensitive quality indicators.

A realistic strategy that would truly encourage safety and quality improvement would need to be implemented at national and European levels, and therefore promote the objective of continuous quality improvement by accrediting organisations that follow the principles and criteria as defined by the Member States in the European Network of Quality and Safety. Therefore, the EFN encourages close collaboration with national stakeholders in developing quality and safety standards that are optimal and strive for excellence in care.

In the best interest of Quality and Safety, all the EU Member States, in accordance to article 5 of the European Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare, should have a nationwide mechanism for the continuous monitoring and development of the quality and safety of the healthcare outcomes. This mechanism should be consistent with a European framework of agreed quality and safety standards by the European Network of Quality and Safety Standards.

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