President Message

Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

eHealth has become high on our political agenda as a driver for health systems reform, in which integrated care and continuity of care have become key priorities in making health systems sustainable and patient centred. As you know, nurses play a key role in this reform, aiming to empower patients and citizens within the process of care. Our efforts in ENS4care to develop eHealth services guidelines in nursing and social care are therefore timely when the Commission keeps "Integrated Care" high on its political agenda.

This was evident during the Riga eHealth Summit in which EFN message was clear: keep mHealth tools as simple as possible enabling nurses to provide more direct patients/citizens care! As the industry starts now designing integrated care models, incorporating big data logarithms for clinical pathways, trying to close the gap between sectors and providers of eHealth services, the Industry will have a bigger return on investment if their products are fit for practice. This means that nurses have a key role to play in the design to make applications "fit for practice". The deployment of these new models which are now massively in pilots needs to support the workforce and lead inevitably to cost-effective services in nursing and social care which are safe and of high quality!

This brings me finally to the concept of "stakeholder engagement", a theme written about and talked about, but not really deployed when products and governance structures are designed. Engaging the frontline staff is a condition for success. If not, recommendations stay at bookshelves and pilots stay pilots or disappear silently.

Therefore, we are at a crossroad, upscaling to real sustainable models of care, where e-health is the enabler for quality and safety. Let's focus on the key challenges of our society, such as dementia, and see how eHealth services can support the carers, the health professionals, and the individual to achieve a high quality of life in the EU.

Looking forward to your support!

Marianne Sipilä
EFN President

> *"Trust plays a key role in shaping patients' and health professionals' decisions on whether to adopt and use eHealth. Nurses are crucial in creating trust in the healthcare system and in the mHealth applications. If it works well for nurses, it will work better for patients and citizens!"*
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> *Paul De Raeve, EFN General Secretary, eHealth week, May 2015, Riga*

News from EFN

EFN 102nd General Assembly, April 2015

The Spring EFN General Assembly agreed on key policies that will support the nursing profession to develop further. The EFN Competency Framework, to be used at national and regional level by the nursing schools to ensure that nursing curriculum are in compliance with the minimum education requirements, including the set of competences listed under Article 31 of Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU, on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications. Furthermore, following the outcome of the DG Santé CPD study, EFN developed a Policy Statement and Position Paper on Continuous Professional Development calling on the national & EU key players to guarantee that nurses all over the EU & Europe have access to CPD. Concerning the Workforce strategy, the EFN members agreed on a Matrix 3+1, including three categories of nurses (General Care Nurse, Specialist Nurse, and Advanced Nurse Practitioner) + the principles of the Healthcare Assistant (HCA) for having more clarity and comparability when collecting data on workforce. The EFN members encourage WHO, EUROSTAT, OECD, ILO and the European Commission (DG Growth) to start deploying these categories to safeguard quality and safety. Finally, the EFN Policy Statement and Position paper on "Moving Care to the Community" becomes an important piece of work for future developments. The next EFN General Assembly will be held in October 2015, in London.

ENS4Care General Assembly

On 15 April, the ENS4Care partners met in Brussels for the 4th General Assembly, to share their views and good practices on the ongoing work and next steps of the project, building on its successes. The partners were briefed by the work packages leaders on the process of validation of the five guidelines (on Prevention, Clinical Practice, Advanced Roles, Integrated Care and ePrescribing), which first version was submitted to the European Commission in February 2015. With the validation results, the guidelines will become final. The ongoing work now mainly focusses on ENS4Care sustainability, leading to the operational design and development of the European Nursing Research Foundation. Policy and evidence are now coming together!

eHealth week Riga - May 2015

Bringing together key health stakeholders as patients, health professionals, health authorities and industry, the eHealth week organised by the Latvian EU Presidency discussed different views on how to implement and regulate mHealth in the EU. Being part of an interesting panel within the "Joint Plenary Green Paper on mHealth", the EFN Secretary General, Paul De Raeve, stressed the key role of mHealth and of the EU nurses in making progress to reform the health systems, and highlighted that mHealth solutions based on certain quality and safety guidelines can facilitate the shift in health care towards a more integrated model with the focus on prevention and continuity of care. Interestingly, a stakeholder event took place and the EU-US Memorandum of Understanding was evaluated on its core topics of which e-skills for the health workforce has become a high priority.

ESCO Reference Group "Healthcare and social work activities"

Being a member of the group, the EFN participated in the last face-to-face ESCO meeting that took place in Brussels on 20-21 April 2015. The chair, David Gorría, informed the participants on the last Maintenance Committee meeting and on ESCO next steps. The SREF group, in which EFN participates, will no longer meet physically and the rest of the occupations that are not yet included in the ESCO platform, will be completed through public consultations and experts called by the Commission. Those occupations that have been already completed will not be modified (including nursing). ESCO will continue working on the database and will be enlarging the number of occupations and sectors.

Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting WP6 Workshop

Being an associated partner of the Joint Action and a member of WP6 (Horizon Scanning), the EFN participated in WP6 Workshop organised in London, on 23 April 2015. The WP leader now designed a deliverable on horizon scanning which needs all attention to read and comment on as the development of the skills and competences of health professionals take into account the changes in the population, different demands in the health

services, with a move towards eHealth services, and a redesign of the health workforce, including a major focus on skills needed in community care, primary care and home based care. Furthermore, health promotion needs to become higher on our agenda as preventing citizens becoming sick is key, next to the need for health professionals to be able to provide education for citizens' empowerment and to work within multidisciplinary teams and advanced roles, with the support of eHealth solutions. A final version of the WP6 report "future skills and competencies" is expected to be delivered to the Executive Board of the Joint Action in November 2015.

Med-e-Tel Conference 2015

Invited as keynote speaker at the Med-e-Tel Conference 2015, organised by the International Society for Telemedicine & eHealth (ISfTeH) on 22-23 April 2015, in Luxembourg, Paul De Raeve, EFN General Secretary, expressed that "eHealth has the potential to bring health and social care closer to the community" and explained that healthcare needs more local and global integration. As such education, communication and continuity of care are becoming key for a successful deployment of eHealth services. As such, eSkills of health and social care professionals need to be enhanced and effectively integrated into their education and training at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, as well as through Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Also invited as keynote speaker, the EFN member Dorota Kilanska, from the Polish Nurses' Association, referred to the achievements of the EFN EU project 'ENS4Care', and explained that the guidelines being developed will bring up-to-date information at the fingertips of service users, carers and those professionals supporting them.

European Parliament Interest Group on Carers

Being a member of the European Parliament Interest Group on Carers, the EFN participated in the meeting held on 6 May 2015, in Brussels, to discuss the 'Family vs. state responsibility for long-term care across the EU', and explore how awareness of the crucial role of informal carers can be increased. Germany, Italy, Slovenia, the Netherlands and Ireland, shared their experience and highlighted that Informal carers continue being inappropriately supported. Furthermore, as an informal carer cannot do everything, the governments need to ensure that there are enough formal carers supporting them and their relatives when needed. Frank Goodwin, from Eurocarers and partner in ENS4Care, highlighted the role of carers in empowering patients but also their own responsibility and needed education to be empowered themselves. In the context of the campaign for a dedicated EU-level Carers Strategy 'Enabling Carers to care', the interest group is now looking into potential EU Recommendations on a Reconciliation package that could highlight the role of carers, recognition of the work they do and better support, training and education for formal and informal carers, and solutions to allow people that care for others to stay in the labour market as longer as possible. The meeting was attended by informal carers that came from Ireland. Their experiences and testimonials describing the challenges they face every day made an impressive contribution to the debate.

News from the EU

Legal actions against Member States failing to comply with their obligations under EU law

Aiming to ensure proper application of EU law for the benefit of the citizens, the European Commission undertakes, on a regular basis, legal actions against the EU Member States who do not comply with their EU obligations. In April 2015, Germany has been asked to fully implement into national law EU rules adapting certain directives in the field of right of establishment and freedom to provide services, following the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the EU. This infringement relates to the recognition of professional qualifications, in this particular case for architects and construction engineers, but could apply to the healthcare professionals and in particular to nurses, if the Directive 2005/36/EC, amended by Directive 2013/55/EU is not properly implemented at national level by 18 January 2016. As such, and to help the EFN members' in this process, the EFN developed a Competency Framework, aiming to be a guideline in the implementation of the competences listed under Article 31 of the Directive.

Blueprint for safer healthcare

Keeping in mind that 8 to 12% of patients admitted to hospitals in the EU suffer from adverse events while receiving healthcare, as healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), medication-related events and complications arising during or after surgical operations, and that half of these events could be avoided, MEPs decided to propose some measures to improve patient safety and to ensure that antibiotics are used more responsibly, prohibiting their use without prescription (therefore it is important to have nurses' prescribing), and providing better information, monitoring and infection control. Furthermore, recognising that the current economic crisis has placed increased pressure on national healthcare budgets, and hence has an impact on patient safety, the MEPs are calling on the EU Member

States to make sure that healthcare systems are not affected by austerity measures and remain adequately funded.

Online Platform for effective use of EU Structural and Investment Funds in Health

The European Commission launched a new online platform, as part of the project "ESIF for Health" co-financed by the EU Health Programme, to support the EU Member States to use the European Structural and Investment Funds for effective health investments (programme 2014-2020). The platform provides information on funding opportunities for health, through a guide that highlights how to efficiently approach health investment planning and implementation, and a technical toolkit listing the 2014-2020 ESIF instruments and mechanisms, appraisal of investment, calls for proposals, indicators, and new healthcare concepts and models.

Time to Deliver the Maternity Leave Directive!

Following the vote on 06 May 2015 on the Maternity Leave Directive, the European Women's Lobby invites you to make your voice heard to make sure that the Maternity Directive is back on the European political agenda by signing the petition now!

IV therapy user survey for doctors and nurses

EU Nurses and doctors are requested to provide their views on Intravenous Therapy. This survey results will be used as background material in nursing studies (namely by Oulu University of Applied Sciences (OAMK), Finland, as thesis work material) and as support material in product development. Deadline: 7 June 2015.

Consumer survey on communication of alcohol associated risks

Taking into account that information on alcohol can be disseminated through various means: producers, public health agencies, health professionals, mass media etc., the European Union Joint Action on Reducing Alcohol Related Harm (RARHA), which brings together expert organisations in public health from 30 EU countries, is now collecting data on communication of alcohol associated risks to map consumers' opinions on the topic. The results will contribute to the discussion on how to communicate information about alcohol-related risks. To complete this survey, click here (Deadline 15 June 2015).

Publications

Building Health Workforce Capacity Through Community-Based Health Professional Education

In May 2014, members of the Institute of Medicine's Global Forum on Innovation in Health Professional Education came together to discuss issues affecting the scale-up and spread of health professionals' education in communities. In presenting a variety of examples from student community service to computer modelling, the workshop aimed to stimulate discussions about how educators might better integrate education with practice in communities. The report of this workshop, that shows that the financial and structural design of health professional education remains in silos and largely focused on academic health centers for training, is now available.

Annual report on gender equality

The European Commission published the 2014 annual report on equality between women and men, presenting the most recent developments and key EU actions on gender equality. It also shows that despite the important progress made over the past years, a lot still remains to be done to close gender gaps!

2015 Ageing Report

The European Commission published a report on Ageing "The 2015 Ageing Report: Economic and budgetary projections for the 28 EU Member States (2013-2060)", based on the new population projections from Eurostat (EUROPOP2013), that highlights the economic, budgetary and societal challenges, including healthcare, long term care and education, that policy makers will have to face in the future, with projections up to 2060. These projections feed into a variety of policy debates at EU level, including the overarching Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Schuman Report - State of the Union 2015

The 6th Schuman Report on the State of the Union is now available, providing better understanding on: strengthening of the euro zone, growth and employment, immigration, transatlantic issues, etc., and provides a summary of political Europe, electoral balances of power within the Member States and the European Parliament, the state of European public opinion, political and economic representation of women in Europe.

Agenda

To view the upcoming meetings' dates, click here.

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