



European Federation of Nurses
Associations

EFN UPDATE

September-October 2016

President Message



Dear EFN Members and Colleagues,

I hope that you all had a very good summer break and that you are now full of energy to restart this second half of the year.

The health challenges at EU level makes it that it is so important to develop tools and mechanisms to address them. As such, the main challenge for the new EU Presidency, Slovakia,

is bringing into its scope of actions the economic growth, the Digital Single Market, migration, and the EU enlargement, crucial topics for the nurses and the nursing profession. On this, the EFN engages with EU policy-makers and EU stakeholders to make sure that the nurses' views are taken into account in these political and policy debates, and that concrete results can be achieved in making the Union a more social Union for frontline.

Next to focussing on the current and upcoming (Malta, Slovenia) EU Presidencies, the EFN will continue working on its key objectives, making nurses, the nursing profession and nursing leadership drive change in any health and social care ecosystem throughout the EU. Therefore, the Directive on Recognition of Professional Qualifications (DIR 2005/36/EC) and the update of Annexe V (Delegated Act/Art.31) stay the main priorities, next to making sure that quality and safety is being kept high on the EU political agenda, with key policy and political discussions ongoing on advanced roles and making sure Antimicrobial Resistance, the European Semester strengthen maintaining patient safety and quality of care at the heart of frontline activities. As such, the digital agenda, eSkills and eHealth services designs need our full attention as the impact on the nursing workforce is huge, including the quality and safety of the services delivered. Integrated care and continuity of care (H2020) are high on EFN political agenda. EFN therefore calls on the other health professionals, the doctors, pharmacists, the social dialogue partners, and the nursing regulators, to work close with EFN to make sure the system changes with us, guaranteeing accessibility, quality and safety. All these political topics will, of course, be discussed by the EFN Members at the next EFN General Assembly to take place on 20-21 October 2016, in Madrid.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Spain.

Marianne Sipilä
EFN President

"Integrated care along the care continuum is essential to ensuring optimal health and social outcomes being achieved for all people living in the EU, and especially those burdened with chronic disease and complex care needs who require attention from a range of professionals from primary and secondary health and social care sectors. In many countries in Europe integrated care is at its very early stages of development as bringing care closer to citizens is not yet perceived as contributing to the sustainability of health and social systems. Investing in community care and in its nursing workforce will help to deliver positive health and well-being outcomes and increase the quality of care, improve cost-effectiveness and free hospitals to provide more acute and specialised care when needed."

EFN article '[Upscaling Integrated Care](#)', in Pan European Networks: Science & Technology (Issue 19), June 2016.

News from EFN

Smartcare EU project final conference & site visits - end of project

For more than three years, 23 [regions](#) and a total of 42 [partners](#) have worked towards making ICT-supported integrated care a reality. The [final conference](#) held in Trieste, on 6 July, [made the final point](#) of the project through the presentation of the results of the evaluation of the [SmartCare](#) services, piloted in nine European regions; the lessons learned by the people developing, implementing and operating the frontline; the socio-economic and business aspects of up-scaling integrated care; and the project Guidelines for the implementation of integrated e-care services, for which the EFN has contributed by making sure the chronic care model and case management were taken up in the users' recommendation. However, deployment at local level necessitates stakeholder engagement of the National Nurses Association, the nursing regulator and the nursing union, making sure the working condition are safeguarded. Being a member of the Smartcare [User Advisory Board](#) (UAB), the EFN also participated in the last pilot visits of the project. The visit at the Máxima Medical Centre in the [North Brabant](#), The Netherlands, in May, showed a multidisciplinary team with advanced roles for nurses that coordinate care and determine the sort of care that the patient needs. The EFN was happy to see a pilot with a solid development, well thought through, next to a clear commitment of all stakeholders, and that has achieved a high level of integrated care through care coordination based on the case manager. Hope this pilot gets more attention politically!

Joint Action EU Health Workforce – end of project

Over the past three years the [Joint Action](#), of which the EFN was a partner, and which came to an end (June 2016), aimed to improve the capacity for health workforce planning and forecasting by bringing [together](#) knowledge and expertise from all over Europe. In May, the [closure event](#) entitled "Towards sustainable health workforce for Europe" held in Mons, Belgium, attended by the EFN member from Belgium and the UK, provided a strategic overview of the work of the Joint Action and its key deliverables including tools, [handbooks](#) and guidelines of the planning methodologies of 7 countries. The EFN believes that overall the Joint action has flagged key issues that impact on the health workforce, even if there was less concrete proposals in terms of what Governments plan to do at National level. The [results](#) provide mainly a source of academic research about the state of play of the EU Health Workforce and as such most deliverables are very theory based and academic. It is therefore important for the nurses and the nursing profession to know how the EU Member States are going to use these deliverables, recommendations, and which specific EU mechanisms could be used, set up, in order to solve the key challenges frontline is confronted with daily! The EU and its projects should reach out more to frontline to safeguard quality and safety. Let's see if there will be a second Joint Action and see how DG Sante engages the professions concerned.

Building value networks for change

Value health systems and innovation are becoming key topics in the EU and in the EFN policy agendas. As such, the EFN participated in the [roundtable](#) on "Disruptive models of healthcare for Europe", held in June 2016. The participants had the opportunity to discuss how innovation could create new value chains that combine traditional health actors (as clinicians and insurers) with technology and data companies; whether protected silos within healthcare can be opened up to engage relevant players from across this value chain; and how to transform successful pilot interventions into large scale implementation. Some argue, mostly those never being at the bedside, the need to introduce radical reforms to long-established institutions and practices. However, the EFN believes engaging people to move together forward is possible, you just need strong leadership. EFN members have a critical and constructive role to play in innovation and in making nurses 'fit for practice' within a reformed health and social ecosystem, based on real stakeholder engagement, multi disciplinarity. Next to promoting continuity and integration of care through investment and upscaling of a nursing-led care coordination models; fostering efficiency of health and social systems through deploying eHealth services and advanced roles; improving quality, safety and cost effectiveness through the development of new skills, including eSkills; and deploying interprofessional education system to improve health and social care outcomes, the EFN believes that it is important to take the pulse of daily

practice and remain informed of the reality of health and social service delivery safety and quality. The systematic knowledge development can make a significant contribution to the development of evidence-based policy towards effective health and social ecosystem reform in Europe. Currently, due to the many pilots, we are more confronted with patchwork, leading to confusion and frustration, including the citizens.

In contrast to the transport sector, being allocated 6.7 billion € under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), why frontline need to keep on struggling to build 'resilient' health and social care systems within the EU? The EU, recognising that Europe's health and social systems need further innovation and investments, has a [new financial instrument](#) – the [European Fund for Strategic Investments \(EFSI\)](#), cornerstone of the Investment Plan for Europe, offering partly guaranteed lending to strategic projects via the European Investment Bank (EIB). EFSI, which can be complemented by the [European Structural and Investment Funds \(ESIF\)](#) and [Horizon 2020](#), is aiming to help address these challenges and support Member States' health and social care systems. To keep Europe's health systems sustainable, policy makers need to [acknowledge](#) the economic value of health for individuals and society.

News from the EU

The Antimicrobial Resistance challenge

Patient Safety, more specifically Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), stays high on the EFN policy agenda. As such, and being a huge concern for the EU nurses, the EFN has been closely following the EU initiatives being developed by the European Commission to strengthen civil society in combatting AMR, as a [new EU Action Plan](#) and [Joint Action](#), next to participating in key policy events as the meeting held in May on the EU guidelines on prudent use of antimicrobials in human health, and the European Antibiotic Awareness Day (EAAD) Technical Advisory Committee meetings. Tackling AMR from the perspective of the prescribers achieves the best results and is the focus of the upcoming ["guidelines on prudent use of antimicrobials in human health"](#) that the Commission will publish soon. In this context the [EFN guidelines on e-prescribing](#) is used to transform the EFN contribution into concrete action, building on the best practices, mainly from Spain and Ireland. To make progress, to change the existing culture of prescribing, to combat AB resistance, medication reconciliation is key for nurses in advanced roles. Although the European Commission published in June the [Eurobarometer results on Antimicrobial Resistance awareness](#), which shows that knowledge across the EU remains low and a 6% decrease in consumption in the last years even though some countries are still showing an increase in their AB consumption, nurses, doctors and pharmacists should lead change. It is therefore crucial for the EFN, the CPME and the PGEU to push for that change! Nurses, healthcare professionals, policy-makers but also the industry, need to be engaged to see it happening. Prescribers' behaviour needs to evolve!

Country-specific Recommendations 2016

The European Commission published, in the context of the [European Semester](#), its [country-specific recommendations for 2016](#). These recommendations are the result of a detailed analysis of EU Member States' plans of budgetary, macroeconomic and structural reforms and provides them with country-specific recommendations for the next 12-18 months, which will also contribute to the objectives of the EU's long-term strategy for jobs and growth, the [Europe 2020 strategy](#). This topic will be discussed by the EFN Members at the next EFN General Assembly to take place in October 2016 in Madrid.

Slovakian EU Presidency

On 1st July Slovakia took over the EU Presidency from the Netherlands for a 6 month period. The Programme of the [Slovak Presidency](#) focuses on four priority areas: an economically strong Europe, a modern single market, sustainable migration and asylum policies and a globally engaged Europe. In the area of employment and social affairs, the Slovak Presidency will work to advance the negotiations on the rules concerning free movement of workers, coordination of social security systems and posting of workers. The Presidency will also aim to improve the functioning of the internal market while improving the quality of life of people with disabilities and improving health protection for workers. As regards health, and following the priorities of the Netherlands Presidency, the Slovak Presidency intends to continue the political debate in the Council on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and on chronic non-communicable diseases. The EFN will follow this Presidency closely by making sure frontline has a say. We encourage the Presidency to engage Slovakian nurses in their policy debates.

Digital Skills at the core of the new Skills agenda for Europe

With technology changing almost every aspect of our lives, including EU health systems, labour markets, and patients' needs, having the right skills is essential. As such, the European Commission adopted on 10 June a new and comprehensive [Skills Agenda for Europe](#), aiming to ensure that people develop a broad set of skills from early on in life, make skills and qualifications more visible and comparable, and improve skills intelligence

for better career choices, which will ultimately boost employability, competitiveness and growth in Europe. As regards health, the shortage of the health workforce, including nurses, the mobility of its professionals and consequent necessity for qualifications' recognition, the need to modernise healthcare systems and the constraints on resources make this need for the right skills (including eSkills) even more needed. Within this context, it is important frontline has a clear say so we can upscale people bottom up, instead of other professions, disconnected from the daily care, telling health professionals what to do, how to do it and when to do it. Change does not work like this!

Have your say on the safety of apps

The European Commission is undertaking a [public consultation](#) on the safety of apps and other non-embedded software in an effort to ensure a high level of health, safety and consumer protection. The consultation will look into the safety of applications which is not already addressed and foreseen by sector-specific legislation, as the [Medical Devices Directives](#). The views of consumers, organisations, public bodies, and businesses across all sectors will help to define the next steps. Deadline to provide your input: 15 September 2016.

Publications

Robert Madelin pushes for ["more ambitious pro-innovation leadership across all European actors"](#)!

eHealth: connecting health systems in Europe

The European Commission published in June a [leaflet](#) outlining the EU policy in terms of eHealth, highlighting that eHealth could be part of the solution if we take advantage of the new technologies that can help to improve the current EU health services. The document stresses the EU challenges, vision, strategy (including the digital single market, and the eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020), tools and expected benefits.

Assessing quality of care

The European Commission expert group on health systems performance assessment (HSPA) published a [report](#) entitled "So What? Strategies across Europe to assess quality of care" which sets out a selection of examples of best practice in assessing the quality of healthcare that have been implemented in some EU Member States, and includes an analysis and general conclusions for policy development. The aim of this report is to provide useful recommendations for policy makers who want to design, set up, run and evaluate a system to assess quality of care.

New Gender Summit report

In response to the OECD ["Our Common Future"](#) policy vision, the Gender Summit has published a new [report](#) entitled ["Gender in science and innovation as component of inclusive socioeconomic growth"](#), focussing on how the outcomes of innovation can be improved for women and men through better understanding of sex-gender relationships and interactions. Environmental health is a good example as it involves biological, social and environmental drivers. Also, taking into account that Gender analysis in research content is a priority in Horizon 2020, the European Commission is [looking for](#) more experts in Gender in research content.

Amenable and preventable deaths statistics

According to a [report](#) released by [Eurostat](#) the highest share of [avoidable deaths](#) are registered in Romania (49.4%) and Latvia (48.5%), followed by Lithuania (45.4%) and Slovakia (44.6%), while the share was below 30% in France (23.8%), ahead of Denmark (27.1%), or Belgium (27.5%). This indicator on amenable mortality is aimed to be used in a global context of health system performance assessments. Assessing the performance of health care systems is already a long time on the agenda of some politicians and policy-makers in the EU. While the amenable mortality indicator is not meant to be a definite or unique measurement of the quality of health care in the Member States, it provides, according to the EU institutions, some indication of the quality and performance of healthcare policies in a country. Anyhow, when it comes to quality and safety, tools should include nursing and gender sensitive indicators, if to be used for decision-making.

Combating Poverty in Europe: Active inclusion and the European Pillar of Social Rights

Building on a European study comparing Germany, Italy, Poland, Sweden and the UK, a newly published [book](#) entitled ["Combating Poverty in Europe"](#) provides an analysis of how actors at the European, national and subnational levels meet this challenge, as well as new insights into the processes and mechanisms that promote or hinder interaction between the increasingly multi-layered European system for responding to poverty and social exclusion in EU Member States.

Agenda

To view the upcoming meetings' dates, click [here](#).

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