

# European Men's Health Forum

Tackling inequalities in men's health across Europe



## Introduction

The state of men's health in Europe is unacceptably poor. The projected male life expectancy in 2020 will remain below that of women's in the 1980's. The incidence of prostate cancer is overtaking that of lung cancer in many countries, and one in three men will soon be obese if nothing is done. The high but still growing incidence of male suicide is only the tip of mental wellbeing issues.

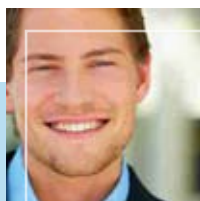
Some factors common to all European countries emerge that may contribute to this situation. Men are often under or misinformed about health matters, and have a natural tendency to take excessive risks with their health. They are often reluctant to seek professional help and delay diagnosis and treatment. Even when public health services are not always adapted to meet the respective needs of each gender, it fuels a public and professional belief that men don't care for their health.

## Mission

The European Men's Health Forum aims to improve men's health across all countries in Europe by promoting collaboration between interested organisations and individuals on the development and application of health-related policies, research, education and prevention programmes.

## Objectives

- Raising the profile of men's health at the Europe-wide level and within individual states.
- Encouraging Europe-wide and national organisations and authorities to include men's health issues in their policies and practice.
- Improving the delivery of health services to men, including primary care and health promotion information.
- Increasing men's awareness of their own health and their treatment options.
- Increasing the awareness of health professionals of men's health issues and their ability to work effectively with male patients and men generally.
- Providing opportunities for organisations and individuals across Europe with an interest in men's health to network and collaborate.



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## Activities

### Awareness-raising

EMHF has developed strong partnerships with key European public health stakeholder groups. Each year, the Forum is represented at several high level international public health events where it delivers key note presentations and expert workshops (e.g. European Health Forum Gastein, World Congress of Men's Health). The Forum has contributed to the development of a series of best selling health manuals. Translated in several languages, these books describe various health issues, such as cancer or obesity, using a language and presentation that appeal to men. Sections of these books are customised and published as mini-manuals.

### Practice sharing

EMHF is a membership-based coalition of national and local men's health organisations active in 20 European countries. It is the only European platform where men's health expertise and practice can be shared and exchanged across borders. It is also a major resource for stakeholder groups such as policy makers, health professionals and care providers, patients' advocates, and health NGOS. The Forum held its first conference in Vienna in 2005 and organises annual network meetings.

### Research

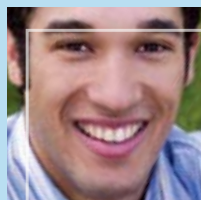
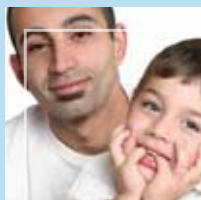
In 2003, the EMHF launched the first Report on the State of men's health in Europe. Statistics across a wide range of conditions and lifestyles determinants revealed worrying health inequalities between men and women as well as among men. In 2005, EMHF presented the conclusions of its pan-European quality of life survey of people living with HIV at the International AIDS Association conference. EMHF is currently working on developing our understanding of men's use of health services, and advocating for a new and updated men's health report.

### Policy development

The EMHF Declaration on the Health of Men and Boys in Europe has become much of an international landmark. It's been largely supported by EU Commissioners and national governments alike. EMHF in cooperation with a wide range of partners and stakeholders are now developing a follow-up action plan. EMHF is also a regular contributor to EU public health policy issues. It ensures the men's health perspective is effectively represented in main debates such as the future EU health strategy, nutrition and physical activity, or information to patients.

## EMHF core values

- **Non-discrimination** - EMHF seeks to improve the health of all males regardless of age, ethnic, religious, cultural, sexual, or other backgrounds.
- **Gender Equity** - The improvement of women and men's health as inextricably linked. EMHF does not believe resources should be reallocated from the health of women or children.
- **A holistic approach to health** - Bio-medical and social dimensions of health are equally important and steps to improve wellbeing should be integrated across all policy areas.
- **Transparency and independence** - EMHF strives to ensure an optimum level of transparency and independence in all strategic aspects of its management and external relations.



**EMHF produces a monthly newsletter and maintains [www.emhf.org](http://www.emhf.org), the only European website with the latest in men's health policy and practice.**

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Registered international not-for-profit organisation 15747/2002