



Challenges for the Management of Long Term Medical Conditions

European Health Forum Gastein 2006 'Health sans frontières'

Meeting Report

Chairman: **Miroslav Mikolášik MEP** (Committee on Regional Development, Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Slovakia)

Speakers: **Professor László Gulácsi** (Head of Health Economics and Technology Assessment in Health Care Unit, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary)

Dr Josep Picas Vidal (General Manager, Barcelona City Primary Care Services at the Catalan Institute of Health, Spain)

Dr Ian Banks (Patients Forum UK, BMA Patient Liaison Group, President European Men's Health Forum, United Kingdom)

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Executive Summary

Organised by the European Men's Health Forum (EMHF) in partnership with Schering AG and Clinical Solutions, this lunch workshop gave a stimulating overview of the challenges caused by the growing prevalence of long term medical conditions in Europe. A constructive debate took place to help identify steps to measure future progress (in the management of these conditions) across EU borders. Part of the official programme of the European Health Forum Gastein 2006, the meeting was held in the Grand Park hotel with a record number of 60 participants from 16 countries representing key health policy makers, senior representatives of European health services, patient organisations, and MEPs.

"The increasing burden from long term medical conditions threatens to overwhelm European health services unless innovative management systems are put in place." said Mr Mikolašik MEP. "Member States and the European Commission need to take this particularly seriously. There are huge variations in hospital admission rates for long term conditions". Three presentations delivered by international experts prompted a debate around three perspectives. Economics and politics of macro management, the use of innovative technologies to meet new care provision challenges and the central role of the patient in the transition from health care to social care, particularly from the perspective of men's poor use of such services.

The meeting was extraordinarily interactive thanks to some excellent chairing by Mr Mikolašik MEP. Prof Ian Banks was among the audience. Armed with a roving microphone, he shared thought provoking insights and took a large number of interventions from the floor. The meeting overran. Several participants who couldn't be given a chance to speak for lack of time, were invited to send their contributions via email.

The following urgent recommendations were accepted by the meeting:

- **European governments and the Commission must prioritise the management of long term medical conditions**
- **There should be greater investment and evaluation of innovative management systems for long term medical conditions (eg telephone outreach systems)**
- **Health information and patient enablement programmes must recognise the needs of patients based on their social-economic group, ethnicity and gender**

This report presents a synopsis of the presentations and a summary of interventions from the participants.

The organisers are committed to further the debate with participants to the 2006 workshop, and to act on its outcomes. This report has been circulated to a panel of European stakeholders who will be asked to highlight work being carried out in their area to address these issues.

EMHF and its partners are pleased to announce that they will report on progress made during the European Health Forum Gastein 2007.