



european**patients'** forum

**A STRONG PATIENTS' VOICE TO DRIVE BETTER HEALTH IN EUROPE**



# The European Patients' Forum

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**HEALTH SERVICES IN EU  
- A patients' perspective**

# My presentation

- European Patients' Forum
- EC Consultation on Health Services
- EPF's Response
- European Parliament policy developments
- Conclusions

# Who is EPF?

- European Platform - set up in 2003
- 27 member organisations
- **VISION** : Patient-centred, equitable healthcare throughout the European Union
- **MISSION**: provide a strong and united patients' voice to put patients at the centre of EU healthcare policies and programmes

# Health Services Consultation

- Launched by European Commission – Sept. 2006
- Deadline Jan. 2007
- **Purpose:** to provide legal certainty, in response to recent court cases brought by patients re. patient mobility

# Background

- **Directive** 2006/123/EC on *Services in the Internal Market* - Health excluded
- **European Court of Justice** : Watts, Kohll Decker cases – allow patients to move freely
- **Council Conclusions** on Common Values and Principles in EU Health Systems

# Health Services Consultation

- **Not** to encourage patient mobility, BUT to ensure **legal framework** and **informed choice**
- Exploration of a whole **range of measures**: regulation, directive, soft law, funding support

# EPF's response

## Key points for patients

- **High quality healthcare** as close to home and as quickly as possible
- **High quality**, timely and accurate **information**, in own language
- Way forward = **a policy mix**:
  - 1.a legally binding instrument,
  - 2.a political “tool” (ex. Patients’ Charter)
  - 3.effective management systems.

# EPF's Response

## Key points for patients (2)

- Patients' **direct involvement** in the decision-making process.
- Fight **health inequalities** – patients from socially vulnerable groups
- Additional **safety net** for redress - Ombudsman system for patients
- Patient organisations - **key role** to supplement information from authorities

# European Parliament

*Resolution - on the provision of cross-border healthcare  
(15 March 2007 )*

- **Legislative framework** at EU level = the best way to ensure legal certainty. Priority - cost reimbursement
- Urges EC to develop guidelines for healthcare to guarantee **patient safety**
- Patient mobility must be a matter for **free patient choice**

# Conclusions

**Patients organisations** – key role to play:

- Health related **policies** at EU, national, local level
- **Mainstreaming health** in other EU policies:  
ex. Cooperation DG SANCO Research, DG Environment

ex. EPF – a **bridge builder**

- Voices patients' concerns at EU institutions
- “Translates” EU policies to grassroots organisation
- Offers opportunities for projects partnerships

# Useful links

## **European Commission – Public Health Website**

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph\\_overview/co\\_operation/mobility/patient\\_mobility\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/co_operation/mobility/patient_mobility_en.htm)

## **European Parliament – Resolution cross-border healthcare**

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sidesSearch/sipadeMapUrl.do?PROG=TA&language=EN&startValue=140>

## **Council Conclusions – Common Values & Principles in EU Health Systems**

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/lsa/89830.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/lsa/89830.pdf)



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