



Europe for Patients - Fact Sheet

The Future for Patients in Europe

February 2004 – January 2007

www.europe4patients.org

Abstract

The Europe for Patients (e4p) project, part of the component on “scientific support to policies” of the European Union’s 6th Framework Research Programme, was launched in February 2004. It will provide the evidence needed to maximise the benefits that can be achieved with enhanced patient mobility in Europe.

The project has high policy relevance, addressing an important European issue. It builds on earlier work by the High Level Reflection Process on Patient Mobility and gathers a multidisciplinary team of Europe’s leading experts on this issue. Coordinated by IESE Business School in Barcelona, e4p brings together the organisations that contributed to the December 2001 Ghent Conference under the Belgian presidency (LSHTM, LSE, OSE, AIM and Ghent University), and the influential reports that arose from it, complemented by the European Observatory on Health Care Systems and research institutions from Northern Ireland (CCBS, Slovenia (IVZ) and Estonia (Praxis). Building on these achievements, this project will have a major impact on European policies in the area of public health, health systems and social protection.

Project Objective

The project will contribute the evidence needed to enable policy makers at EU and national level to take concerted and coordinated action to allow Europe’s citizens / patients to benefit from enhanced mobility in Europe.

Background / Rational

An increasingly integrated Europe offers opportunities for patients to benefit from enhanced patient mobility:

- better access to health care in border regions / other countries (such as between Northern Ireland and Ireland or long term residents in Spain);
- greater access to centres of excellence (with the additional benefit of concentration of European excellence);
- sharing of capacities across borders, thus permitting more efficient use of existing capacity (such as UK patients on waiting lists being treated in Belgium)



To take advantage of opportunities there is a need for better understanding of:

- potential challenges, such as legal, contractual, and regulatory issues;
- patient needs related to information for patients/care providers; cross border communication by professionals in relation to co-ordination of care and quality assurance systems;
- differences in the operation of health systems, including obstacles to better coordination;
- intended and unintended consequences of increased patient mobility in Europe.

The results of this research will contribute to:

- an understanding of how to overcome obstacles to policies on patient mobility that benefit patients and health authorities – through actions at different levels (regional, national, European) employing legal, organizational and regulatory approaches.

Policy Relevance

The project builds on a process started by the **Belgian presidency** at the Ghent conference in December 2001, continued by the **Spanish presidency** in meetings in Malaga & Mahon in February 2002 which led to the establishment in February 2003 of the **High Level Reflection Process on Patient Mobility**, cf. [//europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_overview/Documents/key01_mobility_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_overview/Documents/key01_mobility_en.pdf). It is thus recognised as being of high policy relevance by Europe's politicians.

Project Activities

Research will be carried out on two levels: across Europe and in-depth case studies

- Examining the **Legal Framework** at EU and national level, including recent EU jurisprudence in relation to patient and provider mobility.
- Undertaking a **Situational Analysis**: describing patterns of patient mobility, contracting arrangements, patient orientation and information, communication between professionals, etc.
- **Case Studies** on cross border arrangements, purchased care and long term residents (Ireland, Belgium/UK, Spain, Slovenia/Austria, Estonia/Finland)
- Identification of **Options for Change** in terms of primary legislation and practical and monitoring arrangements related to patient mobility.

The project will be undertaken in close coordination with policy makers at different levels, including Commission staff and those involved in related projects. An Advisory Board will provide guidance, bringing together representatives from key stakeholders, including policy makers, health care providers and patients. The results will be made widely available at regional, national and European level, making use of the well-established network developed by the European Observatory on Health Care Systems.

For more information, please contact the project coordinator, Magdalene Rosenmöller at IESE: tel: (+34) 93 253 4200, magda@iese.edu or visit the project website at www.europe4patients.org