

Green Paper on the European Workforce for Health COM(2008) 725 final

Response of the Association of Medical Schools in Europe to the Green Paper.

1. The Association of Medical Schools in Europe (AMSE, [www.amse-med.eu](http://www.amse-med.eu)) was founded in 1979 as AMDE (Association of Medical Deans in Europe) to create a forum for Medical Schools and Faculties in the European Community and other European countries to establish contacts and exchange information. The purpose of the Association is to stimulate and develop co-operation between Medical Schools and Faculties in Europe and to develop their relations with other professional, governmental and non-governmental organisations in education, academic management, medical research and health care.
2. AMSE is managed by an Executive Committee of eleven members from nine different countries in Europe. The Association has members from 24 countries across Europe. In addition to its other activities, AMSE organises an annual conference on topics of particular interest to deans, heads of school and other staff members of medical faculties.
3. AMSE welcomes the Green Paper, which is timely and necessary. It agrees the challenges set out in the introduction and in the related White Paper [COM(2007) 630 final]. AMSE supports the rationale for the Green Paper, set out in section 3. AMSE also agrees the factors influencing the workforce for health, as set out in section 4.
4. The task of AMSE is to consider the influences of these challenges, factors, and the related future strategies on medical education and on the management of medical schools and university hospitals.
5. In particular, all the challenges set out in section 1 are relevant to the future direction and management of medical education.
6. The ageing demography of Europe also applies to the medical workforce, and AMSE believes that it is crucial that medical schools provide an education for a lifetime of work in health care, not simply training just for the immediate needs of the health care system (relating to section 4.3).
7. Many negative issues of ageing are mentioned in the Green Paper. However, as life expectancy has considerably increased, also the quantity of years with good health has increased, as a result of general wellbeing and developments in medical and social care. These positive achievements could be mentioned, and are in support of the campaign for “return to practice” (section 4.1)

8. In the Green Paper it is stated that the healthcare is becoming increasingly patient-centred. Due to the availability of medical information on the internet and elsewhere, the role of the doctor has become more an adviser or consultant transforming the patient's information to knowledge applicable to the disease condition. This has a major impact on teaching medical doctors, who have to learn how to meet an active patient (or family) applying the principle of consumer-based clinical medicine.
9. AMSE, as a Europe-wide Association strongly supports the substance and ethos of section 4, on managing mobility of health workers in the EU. AMSE also supports sound and moral practice in the interaction of Europe with the global health workforce.
10. Improved data to support decision-making (section 4.6) is an important need. AMSE commends to the EC the developing role of the Avicenna Directories ([www.avicenna.ku.dk](http://www.avicenna.ku.dk)) in providing a future source for such data.
11. Entrepreneurial medical practice is mentioned, albeit briefly (section 6). There are considerable differences between countries in the EU in the level of relevant entrepreneurial activity. This discussion could be expanded. Also, it is important to note that European universities and medical schools are becoming more and more entrepreneurial. Potential consequences and monitoring of this phenomenon would be an interesting field for further discussion.
12. The importance of managing the development of the workforce is mentioned several times. AMSE has a strong interest in promoting sound management practice in medical schools, and has a programme of workshops in this subject.
13. Finally, AMSE would be pleased to work with the Commission in any way felt appropriate in the development of the ideas in this Green Paper.

Copenhagen, 31 March 2009

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