

**NOTE to the PTS WG, on  
Strengthening Patient Safety in Higher Education for Healthcare Professionals**

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**FORWORD**

Recommendation REC(2006)7 of the Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers sets forth recommendation (v) for promoting development of educational programmes for the health sector and recommendation (vii) for an international collaboration for exchanging information and experience on all aspects of patient safety. Patient Safety Education is presently seen as a 3-prong issue, encompassing higher education; on the job and continuing education and educating patients and their families.

This note focuses on proposed actions in follow up of this recommendation to be considered and acted upon by the PTS WG. Such actions would focus on improving patient safety through education in the healthcare organizations. However, in order to achieve today the culture and attitudes for safety for health care professionals of tomorrow and we need long term and sustainable interventions towards higher education for health professionals. Obviously this requires strong synergies with the education sector as well as DG Education and Culture.

The proposal below also builds on similar experiences of creating awareness around specific issues of importance and instigating political drivers leading to implementation into higher education programmes in Medicine and Nursing.

**POINT OF DEPARTURE**

1. **Need for Integration:** Patient Safety Education issues should be treated as an integral part of a broader patient safety agenda and any actions in this area should be well linked and co-ordinated with the activities in the other 4 identified areas of action for the PTS WG
2. **Targeting and Phasing:** Education should be targeted to audiences and specific purposes. Education related activities range from short, targeted actions aiming at creating visibility and awareness around issues to extended courses for in depth treatment of subjects aiming to build particular knowledge and skills. The full range of such activities will be necessary to support Patient Safety programmes during the whole cycle of monitoring and assessing - creating awareness and culture – planning interventions – change and improvement – monitoring and assessing .... Different type of activities will be required at different phases of a PTS program
3. **Interfacing with other sectors:** It is important to notice that in the case of higher education, the health sector represents the job market addressed by educational systems, which may therefore be influenced by means of providing requirements for skills, knowledge and attitudes to be processed by their graduates in order to enter this market.

Furthermore, within the Commission, and particularly DG Education and Culture several activities targeting syllabus and programmes development towards convergence of higher education systems are supported. It is necessary to identify and interface with such initiatives in order to inform and influence funding agencies.

## **PROPOSED ACTIONS**

### **(i) For the Patient Safety Working Group**

To outline the essential elements of a project (which could be best seen as an integral part of an umbrella patient safety project). The deliverables of such a WP could be in the form of

- Accompanying actions in the form of targeted, awareness building activities (Workshops, sessions in European/international conferences, lectures, consumer oriented pamphlets) to be planned around Network activities
- Facilitation of consensus building activities for detailing content and structure of educational programmes for professionals of today and tomorrow
- Dissemination and promotion of education on PTS programmes

### **(ii) For the Commission Services**

To invite to the coming meetings representatives from DG Education and Youth in order to exchange information with the WG

### **(iii) For Member States**

To investigate and establish the contacts to national (and international) initiatives for PTS education.

## **PROPOSED SCHEDULE**

- Liaison with DG EDUC:  
**start immediately and continue as long as required**
- Identify interested MS and organisations to form a small task force for detailing the proposal:  
**by the end of September**
- Prepare an outline project in the form of a WP of an integrated project):  
**to be ready for presentation during the November meeting**
- Co-ordinate activities, content and approach with other PTS WG initiatives and submit timely to DG SANCO for financial support