

MIDDAY EXPRESS

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Public Health: Panel of independent experts to work on the improvement of health care systems

The Commission adopted today a Decision to set up an independent expert panel, to identify effective ways of investing in health and to make healthcare systems sustainable.

The panel will support the reflection process recently initiated by Member States - at the request of the Council. Demographic changes, costly innovation, and rising patients' expectations put constant pressure on the financial sustainability of European health systems. For these reasons, as well as due to the fiscal constraints spawned by the financial crisis, many European Member States have embarked on health system reforms in order to ensure a sustainable provision of high quality care to their citizens.

While the management of health services is clearly the competence of Member States, there is immense value in stronger cooperation at European level. Through the reflection process, Member States have committed themselves to sharing experiences and information about good practices. They will soon be able to summon the Commission's expert panel for independent guidance at EU level.

This panel will be made up of 17 experts, from several areas of expertise, such as primary care, hospital care, pharmaceuticals, research and development, prevention and health promotion, system financing, information systems and patient registers and health inequalities. They will be appointed by the Commission as a result of an open call for interest, which will be launched in the coming weeks.

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/healthcare/docs/dec_panel2012_en.pdf