

EXPERT PANEL ON EFFECTIVE WAYS OF INVESTING IN HEALTH

Request for an expert opinion: Cross-border cooperation

Background – Rationale

Formal cross-border cooperation in health care provision has existed within the European Union for several decades. Some of this co-operation has been done on an entirely bilateral basis, whilst in other cases authorities have used EU tools such as Structural Funds.

In 2011 a European legislative framework to further improve collaboration between Member States was established by the Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border health care. In addition to clarifying the legislative rules applicable to cross-border health care, Article 10(3) of the Cross-border health care Directive requires the European Commission to encourage cross-border cooperation in health care provision at regional and local level, particularly in border regions. The Commission is invited by this article to take useful initiatives to facilitate and promote such cooperation in close contact with the Member States and in accordance with Article 168(2) TFEU.

At EU level a certain amount of research into the topic has already taken place. The Evaluating Care Across Borders: European Union Cross Border Care Collaboration (ECAB: EUCBCC) project, which ran from May 2010 to October 2013, was a collaboration between 13 partner institutions across 11 EU Member States. Following on from this, the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies has published two reports examining current practices and policies in cross-border health care, and analysing seven case studies on cross-border collaboration and health system interactions.

Furthermore, at the level of the European Union several initiatives have been taken to support cross-border cooperation, such as the Recommendation on cross-border interoperability of electronic health record (EHR) systems and the Smart Open Services (SOS) project. As part of the European Cross-Border cooperation (CBC) by Interreg, the European Union has invested in health care cooperation programmes managed by joint structures in NUTS III regions laying directly on the borders, or adjacent to them. Such cooperation programmes include projects such as Telediag, RegionCo and others.

Terms of Reference

The Expert Panel on Effective ways of Investing in Health is requested to identify areas which would potentially benefit from greater formal cross-border cooperation and collaboration in health care provision. This identification should focus on service configuration in border regions, but can also consider issues outside border regions. In particular, the Expert Panel is requested to:

1. Identify areas of existing cross-border co-operation and collaboration in health care provision, and areas where there is the potential for successful co-operation
2. In particular, to identify within this:
 - a. the extent and nature of the existing and potential benefits in cross-border cooperation and collaboration;
 - b. areas which could potentially benefit from greater formal cross-border cooperation and collaboration, especially concerning service configuration in border regions;
 - c. the obstacles to successful cross-border cooperation in health care
 - d. the priorities for actions which could be taken at EU level in order to help overcome some of these obstacles

Timing

The opinion of the Expert Panel should be finalised by June 2015.

Background documents

The Cross-border health care Directive 2011/24/EU

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:088:0045:0065:EN:PDF>

The Evaluating Care Across Borders: European Union Cross Border Care Collaboration (ECAB: EUCBCC) project

<http://www.ecabeurope.eu/>

European Cross-border Cooperation

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/cooperate/cooperation/crossborder/index_en.cfm

Eurohealth; *EU Cross-border health care collaboration*, 2013, Vol.19, No.4:

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/236811/Eurohealth_v19-n4.pdf?ua=1

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, *Hospitals and Borders: Seven case studies on cross-border collaboration and health system interactions*, 2013

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/233515/e96935.pdf

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies; *Cross-border Health Care in the European Union: Mapping and analysing practices and policies*, 2011

http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/135994/e94875.pdf

The Recommendation on cross-border interoperability of electronic health record (EHR) systems

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal->

[content/EN/ALL/;ELX_SESSIONID=0n3sJtLTYBygV4pnJvXQLn2Npz6St1hkHCHWJLjKfJrJyKzGVGrn!-91751260?uri=CELEX:32008H0594](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/;ELX_SESSIONID=0n3sJtLTYBygV4pnJvXQLn2Npz6St1hkHCHWJLjKfJrJyKzGVGrn!-91751260?uri=CELEX:32008H0594)

The Smart Open Services (SOS) project

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/apps/projects/factsheet/index.cfm?project_ref=224991