

Public Health

European Commission's expert panel assesses pricing models for innovative medicines, access to healthcare and performance of primary care

The Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health is preparing three opinions on priority topics of the EU health strategy: payment models for high-cost medicines, access to healthcare and the performance of primary care. The opinions will be ready in the second semester of 2017 and will feed into the further policy work of the Commission.

Opinion on innovative payment models for high-cost innovative medicines.

In the EU, the pharmaceutical legislation lays down harmonised regulatory standards and tools for the authorisation and supervision of medicines. However, efforts to invest on development and timely authorisation of innovative medicines are confronted with challenges, such as the sustainability of health systems, patient access and affordability.

The Commission is committed to ensure accessibility of patients to innovative medicinal products and explore possible synergies between various bodies in the EU. To that end, the Expert Panel has been requested to:

- (a) analyse the current role of the national pricing and reimbursement authorities to improve access on innovative medicines, focusing on the scope to explore new ways of setting prices for specialty medicines in terms of improving access;
- (b) answer the question of how health outcomes can be reflected on price setting, looking in particular to the role of RWD for innovative payment models;
- (c) elaborate on a theoretical framework of health system performance assessment in the area of pharmaceuticals.
- The opinion is expected to be finalised by November 2017.

Opinion on benchmarking access to healthcare in the EU

In April 2017 the European Commission published a recommendation establishing the European Pillar of Social Rights. The recommendation includes a principle on access to good quality preventive and curative health care.

The Panel has been requested to build a framework that can be operationalized and can help guiding the improvement of access to healthcare in EU Member States, taking into consideration the different contexts and the multi-dimensional nature of the challenges:

- (a) suggesting quantitative benchmarks/targets on access to healthcare based on the unmet needs for medical examination indicator.
- (b) propose a qualitative benchmark, based on principles and policy levers and which can be operationalised, to improve access to healthcare in the EU Member States.
- (c) discuss the possible utilization of EU funds and/or other mechanisms to support the improvement of access to healthcare according to the benchmarks proposed.

This opinion is expected to be finalised in September 2017.

Opinion on tools and methodologies for assessing the performance of primary care

Strong primary care can contribute to consolidating the overall health system's performance by providing affordable and accessible care, guiding patients through the health system to find the most appropriate care (substantially reducing avoidable hospital admissions), focusing on individual needs and offering tailored, patient-centred care.

The Expert Panel will provide its views on:

- (a) dimensions and domains for assessing the performance of primary care, including both classical dimensions of HSPA that can be applied to the assessment of primary care (effectiveness, access, etc.) and tailored domains that are specific to primary care;
- (b) specific existing or new indicators for a better understanding of the performance of primary care;
- (c) how the analysed indicators are fitted for policy making and whether they allow the identification of specific levers and policy actions to respond to the highlighted issues;

- (d) advice for an EU agenda on performance assessment of primary care: goals, opportunities, activities, and possible deliverables.

The opinion of the Panel is expected to be finalised in September 2017, and will feed into the Expert Group report on primary care, which will be published in the first quarter of 2018. The opinion on will also contribute to the work of the Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment (HSPA).

Expert Panel

The Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health is an interdisciplinary and independent group established by the European Commission to provide non-binding advice. The Expert Panel aims to provide the necessary evidence that will support the EU countries in delivering high quality care and making their health systems more resilient and efficient whilst improving accessibility to all.

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