

Statement on the Future of Health in the European Union



The **Patient Access Partnership** and its Partners reiterate the importance of continued cooperation between Member States in health policy areas with added-value for Europeans in the light of the upcoming 2019 elections.

This is critical to help ensure that patients across the European Union benefit from equal access to high quality, affordable healthcare as well as research and innovation. Our collaborative work of the last 4 years has demonstrated the existence of profound health inequalities across Europe and the benefits of tackling this together.

According to the Eurobarometer, 68% of Europeans believe that their country has benefited from being a member of the EU, and 70 % of Europeans would like to see more EU health cooperation.

Amid strong concerns about the political rollback of EU involvement in health post 2020 and the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 (EU budget for the future), it is vital to ensure that health is prioritised as an area where Europeans would like to see the EU do more instead of less.

EU policy should be directed to all common health challenges including those with a clear cross-border dimension such as antimicrobial resistance, health systems digital transformation, prevention, health education and early detection; appropriate diagnosis, treatment (including affordable, widely available medicines) and mitigation of communicable, non-communicable and rare diseases.

Collaboration in health – respecting EU Treaty provisions on health and recognising that the organisation of healthcare services falls within the national competence of Member States – should ensure the provision of high quality healthcare for all people across the Union, to enjoy productive lives in a healthy environment, consistent with the World Health Organization Universal Health Coverage policies, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the European Pillar of Social Rights. These endeavours embrace healthcare as a basic human and social right, and recognize that health is a precondition for the achievement of other

objectives such as decreased premature mortality, reduced inequalities, gender equality and the elimination of poverty.

Sharing knowledge across Europe can guide stakeholders in healthcare throughout all Member States. New digital health solutions and disinvestment in obsolete ones can enable more efficient health systems and, combined with patient empowerment policies, they can pave the way towards patient-centred, affordable and sustainable healthcare, including diagnosis, treatments and medicines; Europe should have an ambitious agenda that leads the way for other regions to follow suit.

We commend the discussions during the meeting of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council on June 22, 2018 in Luxembourg and we welcome the clear commitment of most Member States to sustain cooperation at EU-level in the area of health.

In this regard, and aligned with existing initiatives such as *EU4Health*, *All policies for a healthy Europe* and the *EU Health Summit*, we strongly believe that the next European Parliament and European Commission should act in accordance with Member States' interest in continued and enhanced cross-border and European healthcare cooperation and live up to Europeans' rights and expectations.

To ensure that such collaboration and partnership between Member States and the Commission is realised, and in accordance with many stakeholders in the EU health community, we propose that a senior position for health be established at Commission level as Vice-President for Health.

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The statement hereby presented is the product of a lengthy consultation process – it remains open to the support of any interested party, and has been made possible due to the active contribution of the following organizations, all of which are major umbrella bodies representative of their constituencies in every part of Europe:

European Alliance for Access to Safe Medicines (EAASM)

European Alliance for Patient Access (EAfPA)

European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP)

European CanCer organization (ECCO)

European Commission (DG SANTE)

European Confederation of Pharmaceutical Entrepreneurs (EUCOPE)

European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare Information Technology Industry (COCIR)

European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patient Associations (EFA)

European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)

European Forum for Good Clinical Practice (FGCP)

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