

EXPERT PANEL ON EFFECTIVE WAYS OF INVESTING IN HEALTH

Request for an expert opinion: Future EU agenda on quality of health care with a special emphasis on patient safety

Background – Rationale

Quality of health care, and in particular a key dimension – patient safety – has been addressed at EU level by various initiatives, including quality and safety of blood, tissues and organs, quality, safety and efficacy of medicines, medical devices, cancer screening, health professionals and patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

In 2009 patient safety was addressed at EU level in an explicit manner, through adoption of an overarching strategy on patient safety in the form of a Council Recommendation. Two years later the Cross-Border Health Care Directive includes a series of provisions on safety and quality of health care.

The Commission has been supporting the implementation of these provisions through funding research projects, supporting data collection and coordinating exchange of best practice. However, most of these activities are time-limited and will end within a year or two. Thus, there is a major question about the continuity of patient safety and quality activities at EU level.

The following documents will be published in the first months of 2014:

- Eurobarometer on patient safety and quality of care
- Report on public consultation on EU action on quality of care and patient safety
- Second patient safety report

Terms of Reference

The Expert Panel on Effective ways of Investing in Health is requested to give its views on a possible future EU agenda on quality of health care with a special emphasis on patient safety. The opinion of the Panel should take into account previous and ongoing EU activities on patient safety and quality of care. In particular, the Panel is requested:

1. To consider the core dimensions of quality of health care, including patient safety in the European Union.
2. To define within this:
 - a. dimensions that should be given priority at EU level in order to improve quality of health care;
 - b. actions that could be taken at EU level to address the selected dimensions.
3. To demonstrate what would be the added value of proposed EU actions.
4. To specify what information is needed to assess quality and safety of health care in the EU.

Additionally, the Panel is requested to reflect on how the effectiveness of EU policy in the area quality and safety of health care could be evaluated.

Timing

The opinion of the Panel should be finalised by May 2014.

Background documents:

Reflection paper on health care quality 2010

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st09/st09366-re01.en10.pdf>

Eurobarometer on patient safety and quality of care 2010

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_327_sum_en.pdf

Activities of the patient safety and quality of care working group (PSQCWG)

http://ec.europa.eu/health/patient_safety/events/index_en.htm

Joint action on patient safety and quality of care (PaSQ)

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