



UEMO

UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS OMNIPRATICIENS/MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE
EUROPEAN UNION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS/FAMILY PHYSICIANS

UEMO BULLETIN N°04 – 2017

Dear UEMO Members,

This month's bulletin is focused on a variety of EU-related health topics including the revision of the Audio Visual Media Directive (AVMSD), Proportionality test in the context of the new EU regulation of professions, a draft motion to tackle HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis B&C and the current state of labeling of alcoholic beverages in the EU.

We also make mention of AMR, recently recognized as a global and urgent threat at the Berlin G20 summit, and tobacco, which remains one of the biggest threat to human health in the EU and worldwide.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Yours sincerely,

Aldo L'UPO

UEMO President

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EU NEWS

REVISION OF THE AUDIO VISUAL MEDIA DIRECTIVE

23RD MAY 2017



The Council reached a general approach on the proposal for a revised directive on audiovisual media services (AVMS). The aim of the proposal is to respond to the unprecedented technological and market changes that the digital shift has brought about in order to preserve the competitiveness of Europe's audiovisual industry, while preserving fundamental values such as the protection of minors, media pluralism, cultural diversity and consumer protection.

Following intensive work in Council under the Slovak and Maltese Presidencies, the Maltese Presidency obtained an agreement on May 23rd at the Council on a compromise text that provides the necessary rules to shape technological developments in order to protect EU citizens and particularly our children from harmful audiovisual content, such as hate speech, violence and terrorism, whilst preserving freedom of speech.

However, while the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) offers an opportunity to better protect children against advertisement on alcohol and foods high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS), these considerations have not yet been taken into account in the directive's revision.

The committee report states that "Commercial communications regarding alcoholic beverages, tobacco and medical products should still be limited" but fails to propose concrete actions for protecting young people against health-harmful marketing.

Find out more:

- ❖ The 10/05 report from the Culture & Education committee is available [here](#)

VACCINATION WORKS: STATEMENT OF EMA DIRECTOR FOLLOWING EUROPEAN IMMUNIZATION WEEK

27TH MARCH 2017



European Immunization Week (EIW) is celebrated across Europe every year to raise awareness of the importance of immunization for people's health and



well-being. Under the slogan "Vaccines work" EIW 2017 focuses on the need for and benefits of immunization at every stage in life.

In a climate marked by an increasing lack of trust in public health institutions, scientists and scientific knowledge itself in Europe and beyond, Guido Rasi, the Executive Director of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) made a strong statement in support of vaccination. He emphasized that immunisation has helped us to bring some major human diseases under control including smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, yellow fever, whooping cough, polio, and measles, to name a few. He further insisted that Worldwide, vaccines are saving the lives of approximately nine million people every year, more than the whole population of Austria. Today, no child in Europe has to die from formerly common childhood diseases.

For the EMA director this wave of distrust is mainly due to fear coupled with unreliable sources of information and influencers that ignore solid scientific evidence. He finally concluded that :” we all have a role to play in raising awareness of the benefits of vaccines and sounding the alarm about the threat caused by vaccine hesitancy. Keeping children and adults safe with vaccines is a joint responsibility. We need to fight vaccine fears together to win the war against resurging, vaccine-preventable diseases.”

On 31 May, UEMO participated to a high-level workshop on vaccination aimed at launching an action-oriented discussion to explore how cooperation at EU level

can increase vaccination coverage, address shortages and strengthen routine immunisation programmes.

Find out more:

- ❖ The European Vaccine Action Plan is available [here](#).
- ❖ The full statement of EMA director is available [here](#).
- ❖ The programme of the high-level workshop on vaccination is available [here](#).

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION DIRECTIVE – PROPORTIONALITY TEST

17TH MARCH 2017



The Professional Qualifications Directive provides for a system of recognition of professional qualifications in the EU in order to facilitate the free movement of people and services within the single market. In 2013 this directive was amended to require Member States to undertake and complete by January 2016, a 'mutual evaluation' exercise. Under this exercise, Member States were required to give information to the Commission regarding all the regulated professions at national level and to give their evaluation as to whether these regulatory



requirements were compatible with the principles laid down in the directive.

They were also required to submit, by the same deadline, national action plans with information on the regulations they intended to maintain and the reasons for considering that those regulations are compatible with the said principles. The directive then required the Commission to report on its findings, based on the information provided by the Member States and, if appropriate, propose further initiatives.

The proportionality test has the potential to enhance the creation of growth and jobs by Member States through increasing the transparency of their regulated professions and completing a more thorough analysis of their proportionality before adopting any new rules while simultaneously completing reforms in their regulated professions to modernise their requirements.

Find out more:

- ❖ The full legislative text is [available here](#).

DRAFT MOTION FOR EU RESOLUTION ON HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND HEPATITIS

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14TH MAY 2017



Old diseases like tuberculosis are making a strong comeback, particularly with multi-resistant variants in the European Union.

To tackle this issue, co-sponsors have issued a draft motion for a resolution that calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop a comprehensive EU Policy Framework addressing HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis C, bearing in mind the different situation and specific challenges of EU Member States and their neighbouring countries where the burden of these illnesses is the heaviest.

The motion also stresses the importance of working with communities and vulnerable people through multi-sectoral cooperation, with the inclusion of non-governmental organisations, and to ensure the adequate level of spending and resource mobilisation.

Find out more:



❖ The draft motion is available [here](#).

LABELLING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

21TH MAY 2017



The labelling regime for alcoholic beverages goes back to the first general labelling legislation adopted at EU level, where it was provided that for beverages containing more than 1.2% by volume of alcohol, the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission, shall, before 22 December 1982, determine the rules for labelling ingredients.

The Commission presented proposals in 1982, 1992 and 1997, but no agreement was reached. Although the requirements for labelling ingredients that may cause allergies or intolerances cover alcoholic beverages, no rules were introduced for the labelling of ingredients of alcoholic beverages in general. In the Commission proposal for the Regulation on the provision of food information to consumers, alcoholic beverages including alcopops were covered by the requirement to label mandatorily a list of ingredients and a nutrition declaration, except for beer, wine and spirits. In the adopted Regulation 1169/2011, this exemption was extended to all alcoholic beverages. Some Member States

maintained or adopted national measures imposing additional labelling requirements for alcoholic beverages.

At international level, the Codex Alimentarius Standard on the labelling of pre-packaged foods does not exempt alcoholic beverages from the provision of the mandatory list of ingredients.

Find out more:

❖ EU alcohol strategy is available [here](#).

World News

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

31ST MAY 2017



The theme for World No Tobacco Day which took place on 31 May 2017, was "Tobacco – a threat to development." It put forward measures that governments and the public should take to promote health and development by confronting the global tobacco crisis.

A survey published by the European Commission on May 30th shows no decrease in the overall smoking rate in the EU (26%) since 2014. Amongst people aged 15 to 24 the rate has increased from 25% in 2014 to 29% in 2017.



Vytenis Andriukaitis, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said "The increase in youth smoking rates illustrates the urgency for Member States to enforce the provisions of the Tobacco Products Directive which forbid attractive cigarettes aimed at enticing young people: characterising flavours, small packs, 'lipstick-style' packs and misleading elements on packaging. Since May this year all such products must have disappeared from the EU market. I urge all Member States to use all additional tools at their disposal to protect young people and foster smoke free societies."

Significant differences exist between EU countries, with the highest smoking rates in Greece (37%), Bulgaria, France (both 36%) and Croatia (35%). At 7%, Sweden has the lowest smoking rate in the EU. Regular e-cigarette use remains stable at 2%, with 15% having tried such products at some point. With regard to attitudes to tobacco and e-cigarette control measures, the majority of those surveyed (63%) think e-cigarette use should be banned in places where there are smoking bans; and 46% are in favour of plain packaging for cigarettes.

On 15 May 2017, UEMO took part in the stakeholder workshop on implementation of Article 15 & 16 of the Tobacco Products Directive (2014/40/EU). The purpose of the workshop was to collect inputs and comments on key aspects of the legal act and to gather technical recommendations to build an optimized system for tracking & tracing tobacco products in the EU.

Find out more:

- ❖ Watch the video for world no tobacco day made by the WHO [here](#).

- ❖ The survey "Attitudes of Europeans towards tobacco and electronic cigarettes" is available [Here](#).

AMR CONSIDERED GLOBAL ISSUE AT BERLIN G20 SUMMIT

19TH MAY 2017



At a meeting, held on 19 and 20 May 2017 in Berlin, representatives from 20 of the world's leading economies and the European Union signed a declaration on global health in which they recognize antimicrobial resistance as a threat to global health.

Colin Garner, chief executive of executive of the charity Antibiotic Research UK and a former pharmacist, says it is encouraging to see a coordinated response to the threat of antimicrobial resistance. But, he says, it will remain to be seen whether it translates into action.

The countries have pledged to "lead by example" on tackling antimicrobial resistance by putting into place national action plans by the end of 2018, as called for in the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Action Plan. The declaration also states that they will improve antimicrobial resistance surveillance and antibiotic usage, including a drive towards obligatory antibiotic prescribing.



The declaration also states countries will take action to reinvigorate and incentivise research and development on antimicrobial agents and encourage better coordination of existing initiatives.

Globally, the sale of antibiotics over the counter is widespread and a 2015 WHO survey found that most countries had no action plan in place to address antibiotic resistance. As well as exploring ways to combat antimicrobial resistance, the meeting looked at ways to improve global health crisis management and better support vulnerable countries in strengthening their national health systems.

The presidency of the G20, which represent two-thirds of the world population, is currently held by Germany where the leaders' summit will take place in Hamburg in July 2017.

On 31 May 2017, UEMO attended a conference entitled "Innovation in diagnostics for tackling Antimicrobial Resistance" where policymakers and health representatives met within the framework of the European Parliamentary Interest Group on Innovation on health and social care to stimulate the exchange of ideas on innovative diagnostic solutions for managing and fighting antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in Europe.

Find out more:

- ❖ The full declaration of the G20 Health ministers is available [here!](#)

HOW CAN EHEALTH SUPPORT UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE?

24TH MAY 2017



This third global survey of the WHO Global Observatory for eHealth (GOe) investigated how eHealth can support universal health coverage (UHC) in Member States. A total of 125 countries participated in the survey – a clear reflection of the growing interest in this area.

The report considers eHealth foundations built through policy development, funding approaches and capacity building in eHealth through the training of students and professionals. It then observes specific eHealth applications such as mHealth, telehealth, electronic health records systems and eLearning and how these contribute to the goals of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

Find out more:

- ❖ The full report is available [here](#).
- ❖ Check the EU policy on eHealth [here](#).



WHO - STRATEGIZING NATIONAL HEALTH IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A HANDBOOK

24TH MAY 2017



World Health Organization

The global health environment is becoming increasingly complex. Social, demographic and epidemiological transformations fed by globalization, urbanization and ageing populations pose challenges of a magnitude that was not anticipated three decades ago.

In addition, recent global health security threats such as the Ebola virus disease or Zika virus outbreak, and the growing mismatch between the low performance of health systems and the rising expectations of societies, are increasingly becoming a cause for political concern. This often leads to countries prioritizing, or re-prioritizing, efforts towards strengthening health systems, moving towards universal health coverage (UHC) and implementing the idea of health in all policies.

This handbook is designed as a resource for providing up-to-date and practical guidance on national health planning and strategizing for health. It establishes a set of best practices to support strategic plans for health and represents the wealth of experience accumulated by WHO on

national health policies, strategies and plans (NHPSPs). WHO has been one of the leading organizations to support countries in the development of NHPSPs. The focus on improving plans has grown in recent years, in recognition of the benefits of anchoring a strong national health sector in a written vision based on participation, analysis, and evidence.

Find out more:

- ❖ The handbook is available [here](#).

UEMO NEWS

UEMO GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN LONDON

26th MAY 2017



On 26-27 May 2017 the European Union of General Practitioners/ Family physicians (UEMO) General Assembly met in London, United Kingdom.

At this occasion, the UEMO issued a series of statement related to various health-related issues at the EU level including Health Technology Assessment, eHealth and Biosimilar Medicines. Furthermore, the General Assembly adopted the final version of



the Code of Conduct and made a joint statement on the status of patients in Ireland in the post-brexit context.

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