



Strong Participation in the European Health Forum Gastein (30 September to 3 October 2009)

- **600 participants in the leading European conference for health experts and decision-makers**
- **Consequences of the economic crisis for healthcare the thematic focus**
- **Solid programme with more than 20 events in four days**

The European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) taking place in Bad Hofgastein from 30 September to 3 October 2009 is proving to be a magnet for leading European public health sector representatives this year as well. As in previous years, 600 participants from the areas of public health administration, health policy, science, lobbies (patient advocates, NGOs), medicine and business are taking part in the 12th edition of the most important health policy conference for experts and decision-makers in the European Union.

The thematic focus of this year's programme are the numerous consequences of the economic and financial crisis for healthcare. The problem of declining revenues (lower social insurance contributions due to rising unemployment, declines in private health insurance) will be addressed, as will the effects on research activities and rising crisis-related lifestyle habits that are harmful to health (smoking, alcohol, nutrition).

“The potential effects of the economic crisis on the healthcare system cannot be estimated highly enough,” EHFG President Günther Leiner explains. “We have dedicated a significant portion of this year's programme to this issue and have been able to obtain a series of leading experts who will present their concepts and counterstrategies here. Thus the EHFG will provide important ideas for health policy in the European Union and its member states again this year and I am certain that some of what will be discussed by experts and decision-makers in the Gasteinertal in the coming days will be reflected in health policy in Europe.”

In addition to the main theme, the economic crisis, the 20 individual events of the EHFG provide a wide range of content. This includes the especially current issue of pandemics resulting from the concern over the further spread of the New Flu (swine flu), concepts for the future-oriented reorganisation of hospitals and international cooperations for research on and therapy for rare diseases.

Furthermore, the “European Health Award” for outstanding cross-border health initiatives will be presented for the 3rd time on 30 September. In past years awards were presented to an Irish/Northern Irish project for the improved care of dialysis patients in border regions and the “European Alliance against Depression.”

For more information:

EHFG Press Office, c/o MB Dialog, Thomas Brey

mobil: +43 / 676 / 542 39 09

tel.: +43 / 1 / 917 51 18-15

mail: ehfg@mbdialog.at; www.ehfg.org