



European Health Award 2010: smoke-free classes, Parkinson's in everyday life, alcohol prevention and cross-border hospital cooperation among the nominated projects

Six cross-border health projects in areas such as smoking, alcohol prevention, organisation of health care in border regions or chronic diseases were now nominated for the short list of the European Health Award 2010 from which a jury will choose the winning project. The top-class award will be awarded for health initiatives at the European Health Forum Gastein in October.

In the forefront of its annual convention, which is taking place October 6 to 9 this year, the European Health Forum Gastein has now nominated the projects that go into the selection process for the European Health Award, that comes with a €10.000 pursue. From this shortlist, a jury consisting of leading European health experts will choose this year's awardee. The award ceremony takes place in line with the European Health Forum Gastein.

The European Health Award is to highlight and reward projects and initiatives for the improvement of medical care in Europe. Important criteria: more than one country must be involved in the project; the results must be transferable to other states and must have a direct benefit for the majority of the population or larger patient groups.

„Naturally international health programs will be carried by large institutions like the EU but without the ideas and the expertise that is developed by dedicated people in multiple smaller projects many large programs would not have developed in the first place”, says Prof. Dr. Günther Leiner, President of the European Health Forum Gastein and chairman of the expert jury. „With the annually conferred European Health Award we want to recognize this dedication and want to show to a broad public that international cooperation in health care can improve the quality of life of individual patients. Particularly it's about creative projects that help remove inequalities accessing health care.

The six projects on the short list:

1. Chronic Diseases Alliance: a united prevention approach

How can the spreading of chronic non-transmittable diseases on an EU level be contained? The „Alliance for chronic diseases” combines ten charitable European health organizations for chronic non-transmittable diseases like cardiovascular diseases, strokes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, cancer, respiratory or liver disease. These diseases are responsible for 80 percent of all deaths in Europe and the number is rising.

Goal of the alliance is to have a lasting influence on health care politics in the individual countries and to affect an efficient prevention of these chronic non-transmittable diseases. To



this end the alliance has constructed a policy paper that identifies the main causes for chronic diseases such as tobacco, bad diets, alcohol and to little movement and gives references for counter-strategies.

Participating countries: Effects on all 27 member-states of the European Union.

2. Life with Parkinson's Awareness Campaign

Someone who knows the symptoms of the disease can get them treated earlier. Socio economic costs can be reduced that way.

The Parkinson's disease is the second highest neurological disease worldwide. It does not just cause suffering for the affected person and their relatives, but it also represents a high social and economic strain for society. The project „Living with Parkinson's“ provides campaign material in 13 different European countries. With this initiative there should be better information about this disease in the participating countries, the focus lies on employees in health care but also on the affected and their relatives. This is hence of importance since an early diagnosis of Parkinson's leads to a more effective treatment. This also leads to a health economic benefit.

Participating Countries: France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Romania, Spain, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkey and Great Britain.

3. EUnetHTA Joint action – European Network for Health Technology Assessment

How cost-efficient are medical and technical innovations really?

Medical innovations have especially in the last years made an important contribution to improved treatment possibilities in many therapeutic areas. However, data shows that not all innovations achieve an improved effectiveness and they are not always cost efficient either. With the project EunetHTA an EU wide cooperation is being developed for engineering results assessment in the area of health care (Health Technology Assessment, HTA). This cooperation makes the exchange of effectiveness and efficiency of new medicines or offers of medical technology easier, unnecessary multiple evaluations should be avoided. Within the bounds of the project methods and processes are being constructed and the national realisation is being supported.

Participating Countries: 23 EU member states, Norway, Switzerland and Croatia

4. „Healthacross“– Cross-border Health Care Lower Austria-South Bohemia Equal access to care, social adjustment and harmonisation of living conditions in border regions

Why the border regions of two states have to work together for health care.

In the border region lower Austria and south Bohemia/Czech Republic lies the divided city Gmünd/České Velenice: on the Czech Republic side the health care is problematic especially in the area of emergency medical aid. The nearest hospital is 60 km away in České Budějovice. In contrast to that the hospital of Gmünd lies only a few hundred meters away from the border. Until now the committal of Czech patients was not possible because of multiple obstacles. With the project „Healthacross“ now for the first time this cross-national emergency medical aid is possible. This project is only the beginning and further



improvements in the health care of Gmünd/České Velenice are planned.

Participating Countries: Austria, Czech Republic

5. Smokefree Class Competition – a European school-based smoking prevention programme

Why class rooms should already be animated to not even start smoking.

That smoking makes you sick is already known. Nevertheless, current studies show that cigarette consumption is hardly declining. With the contest „Smoke-free classroom” young adults in school are being enlightened about the consequences and effects of cigarette consumption. For that the topic is talked about in class and teachers and students are being encouraged to apply themselves for a smoke-free environment. The Core of the project is a contract that the students of the different classes sign where they pledge to not smoke for half a year. At the end of the week the students talk about it and if everybody kept their promise. The participating students can win a series of prizes and one of them is a trip to another European country. In addition to the contest the parents are enlightened how they can protect their children from tobacco consumption. The project is going a novel way to broach the issue of smoking on the basis of behavioral models and to take away the appearance of „normality” from tobacco consumption.

Participating Countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and Great Britain.

6. The FASE project: Stimulation Alcohol Safe Environments

How alcohol-free zones can be created.

The abuse of alcohol is responsible for 7,4 percent of all disease and premature deaths in the European Union. This development costs the national economies of the EU 125 billion annually. An important high-risk group is young people. With the FASE project counter-strategies to alcohol abuse should be developed – this through the closing of gaps in knowledge about the question which strategies of alcoholism prevention work in which settings. Special attention is put on different aspects of excessive drinking – amongst other things at work or in context with social drinking or alcohol marketing.

In the participating countries multiple scientific studies about the consumption and use of alcohol have been conducted as well as the different legal foundations about adolescent alcohol consumption gathered. On the basis of this material the participants develop suggestions for the political realisation of preventive strategies.

Participating Countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, France, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

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