



EU COMMISSIONER DALLI AT THE EUROPEAN HEALTH FORUM GASTEIN: “MORE INNOVATION TO DO MORE WITH LESS”

Both EU Health Commissioner John Dalli and WHO Regional Director for Europe Zsuzsanna Jakab, speaking at the European Health Forum Gastein, discussed ways to invest in Europe’s future health despite severe global fiscal difficulties. Commissioner Dalli focused on innovation in order to deliver more for less. He also noted this week’s adoption by the European Commission for Cohesion Funds that can be tapped by all EU regions. Regional Director Jakab spoke of the broader European health challenge, beyond the EU member states and beyond the limits of individual government health ministries. She also outlined the vision of “Health 2020” for the decade ahead.

Bad Hofgastein, October 7, 2011 – Current global financial difficulties were never far from the surface in the discussions at the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) aimed at a healthier European population despite extraordinary fiscal constraints. In his closing remarks to the conference, EU Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, John Dalli, pointed out that “Europe needs more innovative ways to invest in health, to do more with less.” A theme stressed throughout the conference was the role of innovation in healthcare and health policy.

As Commissioner Dalli noted, “we need to put innovation at the service of patients: to deliver better and safer healthcare, to more people, in a more efficient and sustainable manner. Innovation in health, together with smart investment, can unlock the potential of more efficient healthcare systems in the future.” Commissioner Dalli announced that “the European Commission has just adopted this past Wednesday a proposal for the future Cohesion Funds which enables all European regions to use the funds to invest in health.”

WHO Regional Director Zsuzsanna Jakab: “False economy to only pay attention to treatment”

Zsuzsanna Jakab, Regional Director for Europe at the World Health Organisation, agreed that technological innovation in the health care industry should be welcomed, while also emphasising that it should not overshadow the need for the whole of government, not just the health sector, to prioritize health. It would be a “false economy to only pay attention to treatment,” she suggested.

“A healthy population can keep a society going and can contribute to the future,” she said. “Investing in a healthy population means that society is less likely to regard those who are sick as a drain on health care and health services resources.”

She outlined the focus of WHO/Europe's new policy, Health 2020, as being both health and well-being, and having a reach beyond the EU to all the 53 countries of the WHO European Region.

The EHFG is the most important conference on health care policy in the EU. This year it attracted more than 600 decision-makers from 45 countries for discussions on the latest developments in health care policy.

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