



16th European Health Forum Gastein
Resilient and Innovative Health Systems in Europe
Bad Hofgastein, Salzburg, October 2 to 4, 2013

Bad Hofgastein, 5 July 2013 – Ahead of its 16th Annual Congress which will be held from October 2 to 4, 2013, the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) has published an update of the program

(http://www.ehfg.org/fileadmin/ehfg/Programm/2013/EHFG2013_2nd_programme_announcement.pdf). This year's theme "Resilient and Innovative Health Systems in Europe" could hardly be more topical, says EHFG President Prof Helmut Brand: "To make health systems resilient against crisis and also to boost and finance innovations is a hard challenge in these days of crisis, poverty and pressure. European health systems are in urgent need of 'shock-proofing' if they are to meet the challenges posed by severe pressure on budgets."

Maastricht University health expert Prof Brand, who took over the presidency of the leading health policy conference at the end of last year, says the focus this year would be on how to safeguard innovation, both technical and social. "Innovation is crucial to European health policy. People derive more direct benefit from innovation in healthcare than in any other area. But austerity policies are having an especially harsh impact in many countries. Making cuts and innovation do not really fit together. So where is the line? At what point do cuts become critical for health systems and endanger social safety nets?"

As in the past, the EHFG will bring together 600 participants from around 50 countries in Europe, as well as Russia, Taiwan, and the SEE countries.

This year's Forum once again expects to host officials from the very top echelons of governments as well as European Commission officials. Keynote speakers will include:

- Alois Stöger, diplômé, Minister of Health, Austria
- Dr Tonio Borg, EU Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, European Commission
- Zsuzsanna Jakab, Regional Director, WHO Europe
- DG Paola Testori Coggi, Director-General, DG Health and Consumers (DG SANCO), European Commission
- Prof Uwe E. Reinhardt, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, USA

The focus of plenary debates will be how to make health systems resilient and innovative, investing in health to achieve wealth, as well as the implications of the free-trade zone Europe-US for health systems. Other plenary sessions will focus on mental health as a motor for healthy economies, the innovative field of mHealth and non-communicable diseases.

Workshops will examine in detail such issues as improving access and combating discrimination in healthcare; patient centred care in diabetes; schizophrenia and social inclusion; state of the art in cancer; stress tests for health economics as well as the underestimated problem of healthcare-associated infections.

For further information: www.ehfg.org.

The EHFG can also be found on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/European-Health-Forum-Gastein>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/GasteinForum>).

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