

## Health & Consumer Protection Directorate General



# Health care and the free movement of professionals in the European Union

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# Health systems co-operation in the EU

- Responsibility for health systems lies with Member States
- Impact of Community law on health systems
- EU co-operation can help to improve services for citizens

## Common challenges across Europe

- **Shortages of health professionals**  
so far limited but can become problematic in particular in regions or for particular specialities
- **Demographic ageing**  
increase of 36% of people aged 65 and over between 2010 and 2030
- **Use of new technologies**  
constant innovation in medical technologies and techniques

# Improvements in health care provision in the EU

- Improve **communication** with citizens
- Increase **civil society** participation
- Promote **international co-operation**
- **Co-operation** through the **High Level Group on health services and medical care**

# Practical co-operation between health systems

- **health professionals**
- **cross border health care**
- **European centres of reference**
- **health technology assessment**
- **information and ehealth**
- **impact assessment**
- **patient safety**

# Health professionals

## **Issues beyond the formal legal framework for the recognition of professional qualifications**

- Continuing professional development to ensure high quality service provision
- Exchange of information and best practice
- Data collection to monitor migration and examination of the impact
- Involvement of representatives of health professionals

# New Health and Consumer Protection programme

- includes a specific strand on health systems co-operation
- support activities and invest more resources within the financial perspectives 2007 - 2013
- actions on the free movement of health professionals included

# High Level Reflection Process

- Discussion in the Council and the European Parliament
- Values and common principles with regard to health
- Universality, equity, solidarity and financial sustainability
- Support Member States in putting these values into practice

# Future challenges

- Increasing pressure in the future
- better use of financial resources
- European co-operation and benchmarking
- health prevention and promotion

# Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

- adopted by Council and EP on 6 June 2005 - Directive 2005/36/EC of 7 September 2005 (O.J. L 255 of 30 September 2005)
- dentists, doctors, midwives, nurses and pharmacists included

# Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

- main aim to improve the conditions of free movement and ensure a simpler management of the system
- close collaboration between competent authorities of MS
- each MS appoints co-ordinator and sets-up contact points

# Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

- in general, good balance between free movement of skilled professionals and consumer protection
- principle of mutual recognition with host-country control
- Regulatory Committee made up of representatives from MS and chaired by the Commission

# Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

- Special case: dentists and doctors
- principle of automatic recognition of medical and dental specialities common to two or more Member States - for new medical specialities will be defined to those common to at least 2/5 of all Member States

# Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

- Entry into force: transposition by Member States within two years from the date of publication - 30 September 2007
- Directorate General Internal Market

## **Website:**

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal\\_market/qualifications/general-system\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/qualifications/general-system_en.htm)

# Conclusions I

- strong European context to health systems
- importance of health and health systems and movement of health professionals in particular
- the EU can provide help and we must work together

## Conclusions II

- the free movement of health professionals needs to be addressed in the European context
- need for more information and guidance for citizens - professionals, patients
- Involvement of all stakeholders and international organisations, such as WHO

# Conclusions III

- Together, we can maintain and improve our current health systems for the future

