

The right health workforce – a matter of planning?

Bad Hofgastein 4.10.2017 – Today experts addressed the matter of health workforce planning at the European Health Forum Gastein, outlined challenges and discussed options for the future.

For a long time decision makers took an appropriately resourced health workforce for granted– but this it is not the case anymore. *“Having the right amount and right skilled health care workers is everybody’s business”* stated Keynote speaker Matthias Wismar. In the near future European Countries might face a lack of health professionals – with severe implications for the health and care of the population. *“Investing in health personnel is not only great for patient safety, but it is also good economy.”* (Anita Asbjørnsen).

Planning, training and the effective deployment of an appropriate health workforce is no longer a national phenomenon. *“Unbalanced mobility and migration of health personnel is the elephant in the room – an open and transparent dialogue between Member States is crucial.”* (Marius Ungureanu).

Free movement of health professionals has a major impact on health systems in various countries. *“What we need are further efforts to coordinate health workforce planning on a European level and to maybe even establish a European framework planning.”* (Herwig Ostermann).

Rather than focussing on planning only, emphasis must be put on the education of health professionals. Patient empowerment, cooperation skills, health literacy and empathic behaviour needs to be part of the training. Other key factors are the recruitment and retention of health workforce: working conditions need to be improved including limiting the workload to adequate levels.

Coordinated health workforce planning on European level and coherent national health workforce policies including a clear planning goal are crucial to ensure the right numbers of health professionals with the right skills and attitudes, in the right place.

This panel was jointly organised by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies and Gesundheit Österreich GmbH.

Speakers:

- » Matthias WISMAR, Health Policy Analyst, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies,
- » Bernhard GIBIS, Head of Dept. Provision and Structure of Health Care Services, Kassenärztliche Bundesvereinigung
- » Anita R. ASBJØRNSEN, International Council of Nurses
- » Aldo LUPO, President, European Union of General Practitioners / Family Doctors
- » Marius-Ionut UNGUREANU, Department of Public Health, Babeş-Bolyai University
- » Herwig OSTERMANN, Executive Director, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH
- » Facilitated by Claudia HABL, Head of International Affairs, Gesundheit Österreich GmbH

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