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Future Directive Proposal on Cross-Border Health-Care to be published the 25th of June – Commissioner Vassiliou: “*Many concerns regarding the Directive Proposal were based on rumours rather than reality*”

Answering to question of British Conservative MEP Mr. **John Bowis**, European Commissioner responsible for health and consumer protection **Ms. Androula Vassiliou** declared that the future proposal on Directive on ‘safe, efficient and high-quality cross-border health-care’ is going to be published **the 25th of June**.

Ms. Vassiliou declined to give details on the differences between the text the Commission is going to officially present the 25th and the drafts we have all seen up to now. She did point out however that ‘*a lot of concerns regarding this Directive’s proposal were based on rumours rather than reality*’.

Prof. Sasso is now discussing dates for a meeting of CEPLIS Health Working Group with the participation of the Commission in order for us to have accurate first-hand information before preparing our reactions.

For further information on this issue, please contact our Secretariat.

Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders (HPCB): the European Commission reconfirms its views on the sufficiency of the Internal Market Information system.

Taking the floor at the latest HPCB meeting, held in Oslo the 30th of last May, the European Commission's representative **Mr. Thomas Weidmann** (DG MARKT) has once more expressed his institution's skepticism on the 'complimentarity' between HPCB and the Internal Market Information (IMI) system.

For **Mr. Weidmann** the provisions of the European Directive (2005/36/EC) on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and the IMI are largely covering all the scopes of HPCB activities. *'Why do you feel the need of setting up such a structure since there is already IMI and the Directive?'* **Mr. Weidmann** asked only to get the usual answer on the 'complimentarity' between the law and the HPCB by **Mrs. Claire Herbert**.

The Commission's official left however a 'door open' on the possibility of a mono-professional body to set up a complimentarity system. *'Such a system could have some interest'*, he admitted.

As you all know, HPCB brings together, national regulatory bodies, ministries, mono-professional federation of regulators (like FEPI, who was represented at the meeting by Dr. Koutroubas) and inter professional umbrellas like CEPLIS.

For further information on the issue, please contact our Secretariat.

Security and cross border care to dominate EU health agenda

In a recent declaration, **Mr. Andrzej Rysz**, Director of Health Directorate at the European Commission's DG Sanco, predicted that ensuring safe, efficient and equitable access to cross-border healthcare will be a top priority of the EU public health policy agenda during the French Presidency of the EU Council (1 July – 31 Dec. 2008).

'I think there will be important developments in the implementation mechanism of the EU health strategy, like the responsibility of the Member States for healthcare systems and, at the same time, discussion on how much the EU should be involved in the development of a health strategy', estimated **Mr. Rys**.

Mr. Rys echoed Commissioner **Vassiliou** in underlining that *'the third important area (of the EU Health Policy Agenda) is cross-border health care and patient rights in cross-border care. This is an issue that will be discussed by the College of Commissioners on 25 June 2008 as part of the social agenda package and we hope this will provide a kind of a new legal framework for the cross-border healthcare area for the coming years – to allow us implement the European Court of Justice rulings on cross-border access to care as well as to ensure that eHealth or telemedicine services can be sent from one country to another safely and efficiently'*.

As for the 'social agenda package', it will consist, according to **Mr. Rys**, in reviewing different policies in social area and is aiming at bringing together interests of several commissioners and portfolios – for example, employment, development, health, consumer protection and education and culture.

The Director of DG SANCO's Health Directorate has also explained that the *'cross-border health care is part of the package because there are specific problems with safe, efficient and equitable access to cross-border health care that we are trying to solve, and of course such access to health care is also an important social issue'*.

For further information on the European Union health policy agenda, please contact our Secretariat.

Conferences to come:

- The European Healthcare Fraud and Corruption Network (EHFCN)** is organising together with European Parliament Political Group EPP-ED, a debate entitled **'Fraud and Corruption in Healthcare: Who Foots the Bill?'**. This debate will take place into the European Parliament in Brussels on June the 10th. Should you be interested in taking part into this meeting, registration can be done trough: enquiries@ehfcn.org
- Privacy Data Protection (**PDP**) is organising its first annual conference entitled: **'1st Annual Data Protection in the Public Sector Conference'**. The meeting will take place in London, UK on 05-06/06/08. Registration can be done at the following electronic address: european-agenda.com@privacydataprotection.net