



PRESS RELEASE

ESICM WELCOMES THE REFLECTION PROCESS ON EU HEALTH INEQUALITIES

The European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM) welcomes the current ongoing consultation process that is designed to improve the understanding of mechanisms relating to health inequalities between and within EU member states, and is aimed at ultimately assessing methods of eradicating them.

The ESICM is a non-profit making international association of individuals. Its objective is the advancement and promotion of knowledge in intensive care medicine, in particular the promotion of the highest standards of multidisciplinary care and safety of critically ill patients and their families through education, research, and professional development.

Rui Moreno, the ESICM President comments: 'The equitable access to high quality healthcare wherever it is needed should be a fundamental right of any EU citizen. The standards of care received should be irrespective of geographic or political boundaries. Health promotion and its diffusion is key, so strategies that improve public health through prevention and education within Member States need to be reinforced. EU leadership and Member States need to strengthen the coordination and the monitoring of their actions so as to maximize benefits for its citizens. High standard hospitals that are well maintained with appropriate infrastructures to allow easy access would allow EU citizens to be treated near to their homes which is what they want.'

Increased investment into education and research pertaining to health service delivery with the aim of reducing inequalities in the provision of care needs to be made. A better understanding of the differences around the Union will help these inequalities to be quantified and then resolved. This understanding can only be achieved with greater information and registry data sets that enable and empower clinicians, managers and politicians to direct their resources appropriately. At the moment there are a number of localized databanks available, however the ESICM believes that a more 'EU-wide' approach is needed and is developing its own processes for acquiring this data.

The ESICM believes that the sharing of best practices and experiences across member states is both vital and necessary for reform to occur. Andrew Rhodes, the ESICM President-elect, called for increased funding to be made available to enable more sophisticated structures to objectively evaluate available evidence and also to create and develop new research projects and structures that will enable some of these differences around the EU to be better understood and reduced. The EU needs to recognize the importance of dissemination of data and processes around the individual member states through educational congresses, seminars and individual-expert exchanges between relevant stakeholders within member states regions, cities and hospitals.

Although health inequalities are a common problem that concerns everybody in the European Society they need to be tackled at an appropriate level, that targets national specific needs rather than a 'one size fits all' approach.

[Consultation document - EU action to reduce health inequalities](#)

For more information, please contact:

Nelly Le Dévic, ESICM Executive Officer

Tel: +32 2 559 03 50

Fax: +32 2 527 00 62

E-mail: nelly.ledevic@esicm.org

For more information about ESICM, consult the website: <http://www.esicm.org/>