

New Eurohealth on EU cross-border health care collaboration

by **Anna Maresso and David McDaid**

By 25th October 2013, European Union Member States should have transposed the Directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare into national law, thus promoting a new era of opportunities for patients seeking health care services in an EU country other than their own.

This issue's **Observer** section starts with an overview that examines the complex reasons why cross-border care is needed and the driving factors that have underpinned the eventual passage of the new Directive. The authors highlight that despite bringing much needed clarity to cross-border health care issues, there are gaps in the Directive that could be addressed fruitfully in the future.

Ten case study articles follow, based on the results of research undertaken as part of the *Evaluating care Across Borders: European Union Cross Border care Collaboration* (ECAB: EUCBCC) project which has sought to analyse a number of the collateral issues connected to cross-border care and collaboration which are sometimes not fully accounted for in the Directive.

In the **Eurohealth International** section, Dirk Van den Steen discusses in more detail the new common rules for recognising and dispensing prescriptions across EU Member States while Paula Franklin looks at the current state of play regarding Europe's two major public health strategies.

Rounding off this section, Beatrice Pipitone and Kenneth Eaton discuss how promoting better oral health in Europe is a good and worthwhile investment in citizen's overall health.

The **Eurohealth Systems and Policies** section showcases articles on the Netherlands, Spain, the region of Catalonia and Cyprus.

Fred Lafeber and Patrick Jeurissen introduce a new initiative which asks citizens and service users to report on waste in the Dutch health and long term care systems, via a dedicated online portal, which received a phenomenal number of responses when it was launched earlier this year.

From Spain, Manuel Garcia-Goñi and colleagues assess whether the Spanish National Health Service is evolving into a high-performing chronic care system able to meet the growing needs of people with chronic, and often co-morbid, conditions.

The use of Information and Communication Technologies is one of the fastest growing areas in health care and harbours the potential to enhance patient services. In their article, Anna Kotzeva and colleagues offer us an in-depth look at the strategic framework developed in Catalonia to make evidence-based decisions on which new e-health initiatives may be productively integrated into the region's public health system.

And in a final article, which again focuses on oral health, Despina Andrioti and her co-authors discuss the provision of dental services to migrants in Cyprus, recommending that the implementation of best-practice guidelines would make such provision more efficient and cost-effective.

In **Eurohealth Monitor**, we share with you two new books, one on cross-border collaborations among hospitals in Europe and the other on federalism and decentralisation in European health



and social care. The news section provides a snapshot of developments in health policy, both nationally and internationally.

We end this issue with a special tribute to the memory of Johan Calltorp, who passed away in September this year. He was a distinguished health care professional, scholar and advisor, known to many of our readers in Scandinavia and internationally, who will miss his wisdom and thoughtful expertise.

Read the [full issue](#)

About the authors

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