

Brussels, 11 June 2018

Cancer Patients Meet in Brussels to call for more EU cooperation in Health

From 8-10 June, 210 stakeholders from 156 organisations and 35 countries gathered in Brussels for the 2018 Annual Congress of the European Cancer Patient Coalition. Representatives from patient organisations, academia, health professionals, and industry met to discuss communication, health technology assessment, immuno-oncology therapy, and survivorship. Members of the European Cancer Patient Coalition were also selected to share their best practices, successes, and challenges.

The President of the European Cancer Patient Coalition, Francesco De Lorenzo, presented some of the Coalition's successes in 2017. The Coalition actively participated in the European Commission public consultation on the future of Health Technology Assessment, were co-authors of the European Commission's "CanCon European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control", and successfully advocated for improvements to the World Health Organisation's 2017 Cancer Resolution. The Coalition is very proud to be invited to join the European Commission's Innovative Partnership Action Against Cancer, which has just been launched. The European Cancer Patient Coalition is one of the few cancer patient organisations directly involved in research. In 2017, the Coalition was an active member of two Innovative Medicines Initiative projects, four Horizon 2020 projects, and one Seventh Framework Programme project.

"These results are an important achievement for all Members of the European Cancer Patient Coalition. The ultimate mission of our organisation is to listen to our Members and represent them at the European level." said Francesco De Lorenzo, President of the European Cancer Patient Coalition. "Each one of our Members are essential for the work of our organisation, and I warmly thank all of them for their tireless work to support Europeans affected by cancer."

In a session chaired by European Cancer Patient Coalition Vice President, Kathi Apostolidis, participants discussed the current situation and future EU cooperation on Health Technology Assessment. A draft online educational module for patient organisations, developed by the European Cancer Patient Coalition, was presented for feedback. Furthermore, there were presentations on reimbursement, how to create a win-win situation, and the European Commission's proposal for stronger EU cooperation on Health Technology Assessment.

This event was held under high patronage of the Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium, the European Parliament, and the European Commission. In a video message from the European Commissioner of Health & Food Safety, Vytenis Andriukaitis stated *"Cancer patients across Europe regrettably face disparities and delays in accessing innovative technologies that work, therefore I think that the focus on Health Technology Assessment for this Annual Conference is excellent. This is a very important and very relevant issue. I believe that EU cooperation has clear potential to facilitate innovative technologies across Europe that truly provide patients with the best treatment available for their specific conditions. The European Parliament and Council are currently discussing the Commission's proposal on HTA. This is the moment that the constructive input of the European Cancer Patient Coalition and all patient organisations is of crucial importance. I would like to thank you for your continued engagement and strong support on our HTA proposal."*

About the European Cancer Patient Coalition

The European Cancer Patient Coalition is the largest European cancer patients' umbrella organization.

The European Cancer Patient Coalition is the voice of cancer patients in Europe. With over 400 members, ECPC is Europe's largest umbrella cancer patients' association, covering all 28 EU member states and many other European and non-European countries. The European Cancer Patient Coalition represents patients affected by all types of cancers, from the rarest to the most common.

Notes to editors:

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