

**Patient-MedTech Dialogue**  
**Patients' Access to Health Technologies Workshop**  
**2 June 2017, Thon Hotel EU, Brussels**  
**Report**

**1. Introduction**

On 2 June 2017, in the context of the Patient-MedTech Dialogue, EPF and MedTech Europe organised a half-day workshop on patients' access to health technologies and the EPF 2017 Campaign on Universal Health Coverage.

The workshop aimed at providing input with a medical technologies perspective to the different dimensions and areas for action of the EPF Campaign on Access to Healthcare and provided discussion outcomes that will feed into the thinking of the Campaign's roadmap which will propose actions that need to be taken to achieve universal health coverage by 2030 for all patients in Europe.

During the workshop, participants had the opportunity to exchange and learn about both patients' and the medical technology industry's perspectives on various themes of access to healthcare. Furthermore, breakout sessions gave the opportunity to exchange views in more detail on two out of five of the Campaigns' action areas: ensuring access to a holistic range of health and social services and committing to sustainable investment in health.



Participants included around 40 representatives from National and European Patients' organisations representatives, EPF and medical technology companies.

**2. Discussions of the workshop**

Nicola Bedlington (EPF Secretary General) and Tanja Valentin (MedTech Europe Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy) welcomed participants, explaining the objectives of the workshop and respectively introducing the importance of access to medical technologies.

Nicola Bedlington informed participants that patients' access to healthcare is a long-standing priority for EPF and its membership, and is at the heart of the vision of the organisation. For many years, EPF has been carrying out actions and initiatives, advocating for equitable access to sustainable and high-quality healthcare. Nicola explained the *raison d'être* of EPF's 2017 Campaign on Access to Healthcare for All and its reference to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Campaign is of a political nature and aims to contribute to making universal access for all a reality by 2030 by calling on the EU and Member States for meaningful commitment and an ambitious action plan. Nicola welcomed the Patient-MedTech dialogue on this topic and ended by emphasising the importance of patient involvement at all stages of the development and design of medical technology to ensure optimal access to quality medical devices.

Tanja Valentin explained how MedTech Europe is supporting their members to make technologies available on the EU market (EU CE marking process), but at the same time making them accessible to patient and citizens (uptake of technologies in national healthcare systems). Medical technology is used at citizens'/patients' and healthcare professionals' level. Tanja voiced her expectations and predictions for the coming years, indicating (1) a great digitalisation and interconnectivity of medical devices and in vitro diagnostics with other services/technologies, (2) a shift towards a value based healthcare system, and (3) a stronger and better collaboration between the MedTech industry and patients.



Nicola and Tanja invited participants to introduce themselves and share their expectations for this workshop in a *tour de table*. Participants' expectations included hearing and exchanging different perspectives on "access", developing a common understanding of different aspects of access to medical technologies, what outcomes can be achieved through this dialogue and working together to improve access for all patients.

### [2.1.1 Introduction to the EPF Campaign on Access to Healthcare for All](#)

Katie Gallagher (EPF Policy Adviser) gave an overview of EPF's previous actions on Access to health and an outline of EPF's current Campaign on Access to Healthcare for All. The campaign is about paving the road to universal access in the EU by 2030. It is of a thematic nature, with action areas having been identified following results of the EPF's survey on access to healthcare that was carried out in 2016. The 5 areas of action are; (1) providing access to quality of care, (2) committing to

sustainable investment in health, (3) encouraging affordability of healthcare products and services, (4) implementing access to a holistic range of health and social services, and (5) ending discrimination and stigma patients are facing in healthcare. The campaign is an opportunity to raise awareness about the barriers that patients face in accessing healthcare, to foster more EU cooperation on access to healthcare and to overturn current trends and change the focus of politicians from short sighted cuts and decisions on investment to a real commitment to a long-term vision where equity of access is a reality. The campaign will result in a roadmap which will aim to identify and propose key political steps and actions that EU decision makers and member states need to take in order to achieve or tend to universal health coverage for all patients in the EU by 2030. The aim of this workshop is to better understand the role of the medical technology industry in tending to achieve optimal access to medical technologies.

### 2.1.2 Introduction to Medical Technologies

Tanja Valentin gave an introduction, explaining the EU market access process for medical technologies, which differs from pharmaceuticals in how they reach patients and citizens. Tanja presented the value of medical technologies for healthcare systems and solutions that are provided across the patient pathway, including technologies used for screening, diagnosis, monitoring, treatment and care purposes. Tanja emphasised how medical technologies can help achieve good clinical outcomes for patients and further value for the society such as being cost-effective for health systems on the long run. Tanja then presented the medtech industry's vision for the next years. Digitalisation, value-based healthcare and improved collaboration with various stakeholders including patients are priorities that were highlighted.

### 2.2 Breakout Sessions

Breakout sessions followed the two introductory presentations and were an opportunity to exchange views on two of the Campaigns' action areas while identify challenges and opportunities as well as recommendations for further action to achieve these goals.

Guiding questions were shared with participants prior to the workshop (see below).

### 2.3 Ensuring access to a holistic range of health and social services

Guiding questions:

- What could, should be the role and contribution of the medtech industry? What are the barriers/opportunities – concrete examples
- How can medtech and patient groups support together this aspect of the campaign? What single action could make the biggest difference?

According to the WHO, 'Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease'. To optimally address and manage chronic conditions, patients require access to integrated care services. In this context, a holistic approach to care encompasses affordable access to physical and mental health services as well as appropriate and integrated support and information from social services.

The session on ensuring access to a holistic range of health and social services was moderated by Nicola Bedlington and Patrick D’Haese (Med-El). The group identified challenges and opportunities, based on which recommendations in short-, mid- and long-term were identified. These are listed below.



| <b>Challenges</b>                                      | <b>Opportunities</b>                     |
|--|--|
| - Multiple chronic conditions                          | - Early diagnosis                        |
| - Mental health conditions                             | - Investing in health                    |
| - Set-up of healthcare systems (silos/fragmentation)   | - Community care/home-care               |
| - Governance (separate health and social care systems) | - Reducing “waste” in healthcare systems |
| - Information (health literacy)                        | - Technological advances                 |
| - Understaffed/overworked healthcare professionals     | - Education of healthcare professionals  |
| - Transparency   | - Big Data                               |
|  | - Self-management                        |
|  | - Transparency                           |

| <b>Recommendations</b>                                   |                                   |   |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Short-term   | Mid-term                          | Long-term                               |
| Role of Social Pillar                                    | Role of the EU (research/funding) | Invest in healthcare (SDGs)             |
| Collaboration of pharma/medtech                          | Build new Business Models*        | IMI                                     |
| Collaboration/information sharing of stakeholders        | Public-Private partnerships       | DRG approach and value-based healthcare |
| Patient empowerment*                                     |                                   |   |
| Guidelines/Code of Conduct (building trust/reputation) * |                                   |   |
| Education of healthcare professionals                    |                                   |   |
| Engagement of policy makers with stakeholders            |                                   |   |

\* key priorities



Many of the challenges identified are clearly linked to opportunities that would help tackle them – in that sense, many concepts are a challenge or opportunity depending on the given perspective. While lack of transparency is clearly one of the identified challenges, it also creates an opportunity that is connected to recommendations identified (as increased transparency will have an impact on building trust and establishing a good reputation).

The recommendations focus on the existing structures and possibilities, and are oriented to concrete and feasible solutions in the short-, mid-, or long-term future.

### 2.3.1 [Committing to sustainable investment in health](#)

Guiding questions:

- What does ‘sustainable investment in health’ mean – when we think of medical technology – through the lens of medtech, through the lens of patients? – concrete examples
- How can we achieve successful sustainable investment by 2030? – concrete examples

This session on committing to sustainable investment in health was moderated by Katie Gallagher and Nigel Talboys (Terumo BCT).



According to EPF, sustainable investment comprises investment in prevention and chronic disease management where health promotion, prevention and patient centred chronic disease management are seen as part of a continuum. Insufficient or inadequate investment in health has a negative impact on patients’ access and often translates in health inequalities and poorer health outcomes for the population.

The main challenge identified was “changing the mindset” and gather more information on patient experience, with the aim of moving towards a system based on patient experience. If the goal for 2030 is to achieve universal access, we need to identify what we mean by that – from a sustainability point of view – in order to develop concrete objectives and actions.

The group identified that a shift from a cost drain, illness driven system to a patient centred value-based investment system with empowerment, health in all policies and integration of hospital, primary and home care at the centre, is required in order to tend to achieve sustainable investment in healthcare. The group concluded that the following themes will contribute to sustainable investment in health: prevention, early diagnosis, reduction of waste, efficiency, training of health care professionals, education and information, data management, improved affordability and increased innovation for products and services.

There was a clear alignment between the different participants on what needs to be achieved, with a common view on universal access, although views on how sustainable investment is to be achieved

deviated. Furthermore, the group identified that policy makers and governments have a significant role in identifying the measures required to achieve sustainable investment.

An important outcome of the session was the conclusion that industry should understand the needs and wants of patients and integrate this in their way of working, in order to achieve sustainability.

#### 2.4 Sharing of outcomes in Plenary

The breakout sessions were followed by a sharing of outcomes in plenary. Breakout session moderators reported back on outcomes of their discussions and proposed actions.

A discussion on the future of health collaboration at EU level then followed. Concerns over the discontinuation of the health programme post 2020 were voiced. Both organisations exchanged respective initiatives that were being undertaken – with the EPF Campaign on access to healthcare contributing to the messaging of the importance of continued EU health collaboration. Organisations agreed that illustrating the value of EU health collaboration and explored further actions including work with the EU 40 in the European Parliament, the EU presidency trio and the SDG framework which provides us with a strong platform to counter the uncertain future of the public health programme and DG SANTE’s coordinating role.



### **3. Concluding remarks and next steps**

Nicola and Tanja thanked participants for their interest and contributions. Nicola concluded by identifying key outcomes, take away messages and next steps, emphasising the role of the MedTech industry as an enabler to achieving universal health coverage and that various aspects of access need to be described and defined further in order to identify more tangible industry commitments. Tanja thanked participants and both organisations for the successful workshops that had been carried out, reiterating MedTech’s commitment to the patient access partnership (PACT), to this dialogue and to further collaboration.

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