



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

Association internationale sans but lucratif International non-profit organisation

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**To Presidents and Heads of delegations of National Medical Associations Member of UEMS
Representatives of UEMS bodies**

Cc UEMS Enlarged Executive Committee

RE: UEMS' support to the EU4Health programme

Dear Colleagues,

UEMS is registered in Brussels as an International Non-profit Association (AISBL) of national medical associations representing medical specialists from all 31 EU and EEA countries. With 4 associate and 5 observer organizations representing non-EU countries it represents almost 1.5 million medical specialists. Since its establishment 62 years ago UEMS has been developing voluntary European standards for continuing professional development of medical specialists, including European Training Requirements, European examinations and standards for continuing medical education.

The European Union has become a unique area of international, cross-border collaboration, personal and professional mobility, scientific, cultural and economic exchange. Assuring EU citizens equitable, common access to high quality healthcare services has become one of EU priorities. The European Commission started many European initiatives in the framework of cross-border care Directive. However, patient and healthcare professionals mobility, and recently COVID-19 pandemic have shown that significant differences in access to healthcare, quality of services and health protection level remain. European patients organizations associated in the European Patients Forum addressed these issues in the statement "High time for enhanced European coordination and competence on health". The European Commission report on implementation of

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amended professional qualifications Directive also shows that in the field of professional development there is ample space for more intensive and wider European collaboration and harmonization.

The need for enhanced collaboration that would result in better preparedness for health challenges, more uniform access to high quality health care, adequate number of highly competent medical specialists and other healthcare professionals has been also strongly expressed in EU4Health proposal. Recent Council's decision to cut substantially the budget allocated to health could seriously delay much needed action. If funding remains limited, priority should be given to health programme for the training and the development of healthcare professionals. To this end, UEMS supports the European Parliament resolution of 23 July 2020 on the conclusions of the extraordinary European Council meeting of 17-21 July 2020 (2020/2732(RSP)).

The UEMS continues to advocate for more collaboration and harmonization in all aspects of medical specialist care. During public consultations on professional qualifications recognition, cross-border care and similar European initiatives UEMS proposed implementation of wide range of solutions supporting professional and educational mobility, harmonization of training on the basis of professional competencies.

The UEMS strongly supports the EU4Health proposal and proposals outlined in the EPF Statement. Since many years, working on voluntary basis and without public funding, European medical specialists have developed models for continuing professional development of European medical specialists. These models have been implemented on voluntary basis in a number of EU Member States and beyond, and are an excellent basis for pan-European initiatives.

European medical specialists expect that their long-lasting efforts towards more intensive and wider European collaboration and harmonization together with needs expressed in EU4Health project and in European Patients Forum statement will result in quick adoption of projects concentrated on health of and healthcare for European citizens.



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