



Brussels, 2 October 2014

To: Heads of State and Government of the European Union Member States

CC: Ministers of Health of the European Union Member States

Dear Heads of State, Dear Prime Ministers,

We are writing to support Member States who have already expressed their concerns<sup>1</sup> on the decision of European Commission President Elect Jean-Claude Juncker to move the competence for medicinal products and health technologies from the Commissioner in charge of Health to the Commissioner in charge of Internal Market and Industry within the new Commission. We would like to ask for your full support to have that decision reversed.

In September, a coalition of health organisations wrote to President Elect Juncker highlighting that in 2009, responsibility for medicines and medical devices were moved into the hands of the Health Commissioner to harmonise pharmaceutical governance within Member States and facilitate emergency preparedness. Returning them to the Commissioner for Internal Market and Industry is unjustified and represents a major step back.<sup>2</sup>

In his answer, the President Elect highlighted that *“As President of the Commission, I will make sure that public health will be at least as important in our policies as internal market considerations”*<sup>3</sup> but it is our belief that this is not reflected in the structure of the Commission. The President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, has also demanded satisfactory answers to concerns over the reorganisation of the structure of the Commission, including the need for a coherent approach in public health policy.<sup>4</sup> Despite this, the President Elect is showing, so far, no intention to reverse his potentially catastrophic decision.

The shift of EU pharmaceutical policy will put Europe’s security at risk and is in contradiction with how pharmaceutical policy is governed in all 28 EU Member States. With the responsibility for pharmaceutical and medical devices policies removed out of Commissioner designate for Health Dr Vytenis Andriukaitis’ portfolio, the latter runs the risk of not being able to fulfil his mandate to ensure pandemic preparedness, to coordinate health policies and their outcomes, all through the spectrum of care services and goods. This could affect the well-being of more than 500 million people living in Europe.

We hope we can count on your support and strong political leadership for this vitally important public health issue.

Yours Sincerely,

<sup>1</sup> A proposal on the move tabled by the Belgian Health Minister during an informal Health Council meeting on 23 September [was supported](#) by colleagues from France, Cyprus, Austria, Greece, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania.

<sup>2</sup> [\[Open Letter\] To President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker on move of medicinal products and health technologies to the portfolio of the Commissioner for internal market and industry](#)

<sup>3</sup> [http://epha.org/IMG/pdf/Letter\\_signed\\_by\\_Juncker\\_to\\_NGOs.pdf](http://epha.org/IMG/pdf/Letter_signed_by_Juncker_to_NGOs.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [Schulz demands response from Juncker on environment and health portfolios](#), European Voice, 26 September

- Signatories, in alphabetic order:



The AEMH provides a European platform for hospital physicians, which develops and maintains a spirit of cooperation and communication among its national member delegations, improving the understanding of the different health systems. It encourages the exchange of ideas and experiences and promotes discussion among doctors, patients and politicians with the major

objective of promoting health and improving patient safety.



AGE Platform Europe is a European network of more than 150 organisations of and for people aged 50+ representing directly over 40 million older people in Europe. AGE work focuses on a wide range of policy areas that impact on older and retired people. These include issues of anti-discrimination, employment of older workers and active ageing, social protection, pension reforms, social inclusion, health, elder abuse, intergenerational solidarity, research, accessibility of public transport and of the build environment, and new technologies (ICT). AGE Platform Europe takes also

active part in several EU projects.



Consumers on the European stage. BEUC acts as the umbrella group in Brussels for its members and our main task is to represent them at European stage and defend the interests of all Europe's consumers. BEUC investigates EU decisions and developments likely to affect consumers, with a special focus on eight areas identified as priorities by our members: Financial Services, Food, Digital Rights, Consumer Rights, Sustainability, Safety, Health and Energy. To cope with these challenges

the Secretariat has a staff of around 35.



The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) aims to promote the highest standards of medical training and medical practice in order to achieve the highest quality of health care for all patients in Europe. CPME is also concerned with the promotion of public health, the relationship between patients and doctors and the free movement of doctors within the European Union. CPME represents the National Medical Associations of 27 countries in Europe and works closely with the National Medical Associations of countries that have applied for EU membership as well as specialized European medical

associations. To achieve its goals, CPME co-operates proactively with the Institutions of the European Union.



The European Central Council of Homeopaths (ECCH) is an international council whose membership is made up of established associations of professional homeopaths existing within individual countries. Established in 1990 ECCH focuses its representational activities within the boundaries of Europe and specifically within the European Union. The Council is non profit-making unincorporated association registered in the United Kingdom. ECCH is an active member of the Brussels-based European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), a Corresponding Member of the European Coalition for Homeopathic and Anthroposophic

Medical Products (ECHAMP) and has NGO Participatory Status with the Council of Europe



The vision of Association of European Cancer Leagues is for a Europe Free of Cancers. The role of the Association of European Cancer Leagues is to facilitate the collaboration between cancer leagues throughout Europe and to influence EU and pan-European policies. The mission of the Association of European

Cancer Leagues is to influence and improve cancer control and cancer care in Europe through collaboration between its members in their fight against cancer, and to influence EU and pan-European policies.



Active since 1982, the European Health Management Association (EHMA) is a membership organisation open to all organisations and individuals committed to improving health and healthcare by raising standards of health management. With over 170 members in 38 countries their members represent all levels of the health system. EHMA is the only membership organisation in Europe to bring together policy makers, health managers, health professionals, researchers and educators.



fighting heart disease  
and stroke  
european heart network

The European Heart Network (EHN) is a Brussels-based alliance of heart foundations and likeminded non-governmental organisations throughout Europe, with member organisations in 24 countries. The EHN plays a leading role in the prevention

and reduction of cardiovascular diseases, in particular heart disease and stroke, through advocacy, networking, capacity-building and patient support, so that they are no longer a major cause of premature death and disability throughout Europe.

## European Institute of Women's Health *Setting the Agenda in Women's Health*



The European Institute of Women's Health's research reports and communication materials highlight that

the incidence and prevalence of some diseases are higher in women than men, while others affect men and women differently. Gender is an important variable in understanding health and health behaviour. For example, in response to the EU Commission's consultation on health inequalities (2009), the Institute recommended that more information and awareness on certain diseases pertinent to women was needed.



ELPA emerged from a desire amongst European liver patient groups to share their experiences of the often very different approaches adopted in different countries. In June 2004, 13 patient groups from 10 European and Mediterranean Basin countries met to create the association. ELPA now has 34 members from 26 countries. ELPA's aim is to promote the interests of people with liver disease and in particular: to highlight the size of the problem; to promote awareness and prevention; to address the low profile of liver disease

as compared to other areas of medicine such as heart disease; to share experience of successful initiatives; to work with professional bodies such as EASL and with the EU to ensure that treatment and care are harmonised across Europe to the highest standards.



The European Medical Students' Association (EMSA), with medical faculties and individuals as members, integrates medical students in Europe through activities organized for and by medical students and representing them in Brussels towards European Institutions. Since the foundation of EMSA, many medical faculties throughout Europe have enrolled within its 5 pillar structure. It currently unites over 100 medical faculties from 27 countries across Europe. EMSA seeks to improve the health and quality of care of the citizens of Europe by acting as a conduit for increased interaction and sharing of knowledge between European medical students in the areas of Medical education, Ethics, Science, Public health and European integration. EMSA is an associated organisation of the CPME Standing Committee of European Doctors.



The European Patients' Forum is an umbrella organisation that works with patients' groups in public health and health advocacy across Europe. EPF's 64 Members represent specific chronic disease groups at EU level or are national coalitions of patients. A vision is that all patients with chronic and/or lifelong conditions in the EU have access to high quality, patient-centred equitable health and social care. Mission of EPF is to ensure that the patients' community drives policies and programmes that affect patients' lives to bring changes empowering them to be equal citizens in the EU.



EPHA is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium (EPHAC), the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), and the EU Civil Society Contact Group. <http://www.epha.org/>



The European Public Health Association, or EUPHA in short, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations and institutes in Europe. EUPHA was founded in 1992 by 15 members (12 countries). EUPHA now has 71 members from 40 countries: 41 national associations of public health; 18 institutional members; 8 European NGOs; 4 individual members. EUPHA is an international, multidisciplinary, scientific organisation, bringing together around 14'000 public health experts for professional exchange and collaboration throughout Europe. We encourage a multidisciplinary approach to public health.



Health Action International (HAI) is working towards a world where all people, especially those who are poor or marginalised, are able to exercise their human right to health. HAI supports rational and economic medicines' policy and advocates for social justice in health care by improving access to essential medicines and promoting the rational use of medicines.



The International Diabetes Federation Europe (IDF Europe) is an umbrella organization of over 69 national diabetes associations in 47 European countries. We are a diverse and inclusive multicultural network of national diabetes associations, representing both people living with diabetes and healthcare

professionals. Through our activities, we aim to influence policy, increase public awareness and encourage health improvement, and promote the exchange of best practice and high-quality information about diabetes throughout the European region.



PGEU is the European organisation representing community pharmacists. Its members are the chambers and professional organisations of pharmacists in 34 European countries. Through its 46 member associations, it represents over 400,000 European Community pharmacists.



## Royal College of Physicians

The Royal College of Physicians is an independent professional membership organisation and registered charity, representing over 28,000 physicians in the UK and internationally. The Royal College of Physicians' mission is to drive improvements in health and healthcare has never

been more important. As an independent membership organisation, RCP is committed to supporting physicians through every stage of their career. No one knows more about the health service than our member doctors working in hospitals across the UK. We draw on their knowledge and expertise to develop evidence-based policy in key areas of healthcare, from health service reform to public health issues like alcohol, obesity and tobacco. We champion medical professionalism and leadership, promote patient-centred care and drive improvements in clinical practice, the design and delivery of health services and the health of the publi

The European Union of Medical Specialists (Union Européenne des Médecins Spécialistes – UEMS) is a non-



governmental organisation representing national associations of medical specialists in the European Union and in associated countries. UEMS is the oldest medical organisation in Europe as it celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2008. With a current membership of 34 countries, it is the representative organisation of the National Associations of Medical Specialists in the European Union and its associated countries. UEMS represents over 1.6 million medical specialists in all the different specialties. It also has strong links and relations with European Institutions (Commission and Parliament), the other independent European Medical Organisations and the European Medical / Scientific Societies. By its

agreed documents, UEMS sets standards for high quality healthcare practice that are transmitted to the Authorities and Institutions of the EU and the National Medical Associations stimulating and encouraging them to implement its recommendations.