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HoNCAB project extension

HoNCAB project was initially planned to last three years, thus it was expected to end in August 2015. However, thanks to the interesting results achieved by the core Working Packages and in order to promote a full year monitoring of cross-borders flows, the Project obtained a six months extension. This extra time will promote a deeper and more relevant analysis of the data collected within the Work Package 4, which established a system for exchange of information between hospitals on cross-border patient flows based on a defined set of variables, and the Work Package 5, which collected patients' qualitative assessments of the perceived quality of care received abroad.

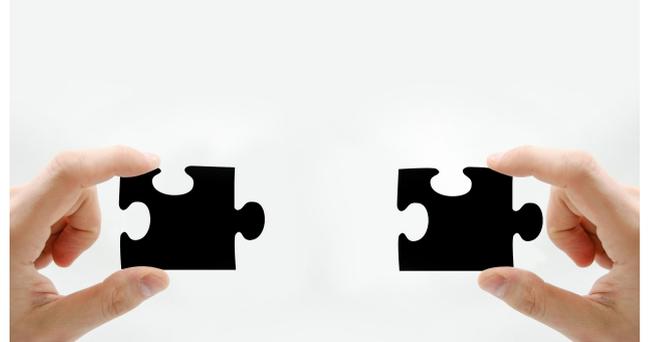
To date, 679 patients' files were correctly uploaded on the HoNCAB database, together with 99 questionnaires from patients.

The extension will also enhance the preparatory work for the launch of the [Hospital Network for Care Across Borders in Europe](#). The Network brings together hospitals interested in the issue of cross-border healthcare. Members can share their practical experiences, opportunities and critical issues concerning cross-border care, as well as practical and feasible solutions.

News from the Network of Hospitals – Annual meeting of the Management Board

The [Hospital Network for Care Across Borders in Europe](#) held its annual meeting of the [Network Management Board](#) on the 30th of June 2015.

Hospital Network for Care Across Borders in Europe is the new name agreed by the Board on this occasion. This rebranded name will allow the Network to illustrate at a glance its aim and keep the existing logo while reflecting the European scope of the collaboration.



The virtual annual meeting represented the opportunity to discuss further developments of the Network's activities and to start a critical discussion concerning its future sustainability following the end of the contractual activities.

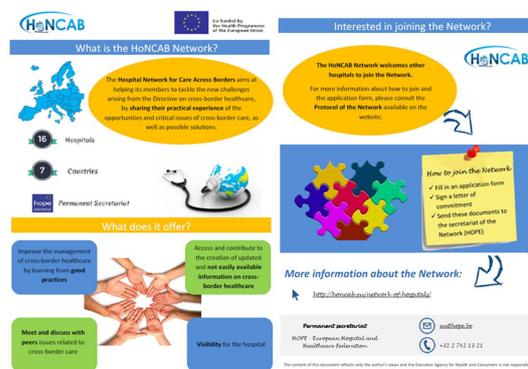
The meeting started with a presentation of the website innovations which are the new "[Useful documents](#)" section and the amended "[Network membership](#)" section which now includes name and contact e-mail of the Liaison Officer of each hospital member.

Another discussed point concerned the main benefits the Network is able to give to its members, linked activities and how these can be sustained in the short and medium term after the end of the EU co-funding. The Board agreed to produce a document highlighting the strategy for the sustainability of the Network.

The Board also discussed a revised version of the [Network Protocol](#) which defines Network's objectives, benefits from participation, its core values as well as governance procedures and how to apply to become a member. After a first version released in 2013 modifications were needed in order to guarantee the Network sustainability and to facilitate its enlargement.

Finally, the Board discussed the preliminary works in preparation of the Final Conference, occasion on which the Network will be officially launched.

News from the Network of Hospitals – Revised Protocol and Network leaflet



In July, the Hospital Network for Care Across Borders in Europe adopted a revised Protocol of the Network. The new version defines five core elements of the Network: its objectives; benefits from getting involved; the core values of the Network; procedures of internal governance; and procedures to apply to become a member. The Protocol needed to be updated regarding the future activities and objectives of the Network.

At the same time, the Network produced a leaflet with the aim to increase awareness about the Network, but also to provide information to hospitals willing to join.

The revised version of the Protocol and the leaflet are available at:

<http://honcab.eu/network-of-hospitals/>

Operation of the cross-border healthcare Directive - European Commission report

The 4th of September 2015, the European Commission published a report on the state of play of the Directive 2011/24/EU concerning the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare. This Directive came into force on the 24th of April 2011 and was due to be transposed by Member States by the 25th of October 2013. This report was produced in accordance with Article 20 of the same Directive: "*the Commission shall by 25 October 2015 and subsequently every three years thereafter, drawn up a report on the operation of this Directive and submit it to the European Parliament and the Council*".



The report shows significant legislative progresses at EU-level in the past two years, coupled with genuine efforts at national level. The Directive also improved transparency and patient mobility throughout the EU, and enabled progress on Health Technology Assessment, eHealth cooperation and European Reference Networks. However, the report shows that European citizens' awareness about their right to be treated in another EU country remains low. In fact, less than two in ten citizens feel they are informed about their rights in this area and only one in ten are aware of the National Contact Points (NCPs). Awareness of NCPs and their activities varies widely between EU countries.

In its conclusion, the report underlines that the level of use of planned healthcare is far below the potential levels suggested by the [Eurobarometer's survey](#) released in May. Conclusions also highlight that information to patients about their general rights to reimbursement should be improved as well as information on how to use these rights in practice.

Finally, in some Member States barriers to patient mobility are significant and sometime result of intentional political choices such as: lack of clarity about treatments subject to prior authorisation; request of unjustified prior authorisation; and burdensome administrative requirements. These and others contribute to deter patients from going abroad to seek treatment.

The report is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/cross_border_care/docs/2015_operation_report_dir201124eu_en.pdf

Upcoming events

12 – 13 November

Committee of the Regions
Brussels, Belgium

The Future of Cross-Border Cooperation in Europe

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**Co-funded by
the Health Programme
of the European Union**

This e-newsletter arises from the HoNCAB project, which has received funding by the Health Programme of the European Union.

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