



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

MEMO

Brussels, 26 February 2014

Q&A on the third Health Programme 2014-2020

What is the overall aim of the new health programme?

The third Programme of EU action in the field of health (2014-2020) is about fostering health in Europe by encouraging cooperation between Member States to improve the health policies that benefit their citizens.

The programme builds on the two previous health programmes 2003-2007 and 2008-2013 with the objective of complementing the health policies of EU Member States to promote health, reduce health inequalities, protect people from serious cross-border health threats, encourage innovation in health and increase the sustainability of their health systems.

As health is an indispensable condition for development, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, we expect that the health programme will advance the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

How does the third health programme compare with the previous two?

The new programme is more focused towards how health can contribute to growth and to the objectives of Europe 2020 - in particular as regards employment, innovation, sustainability. It is also more focused on **key issues where EU action can deliver added value** and make a real difference to Member States.

Priorities are better defined and more targeted, with a focus on 23 key thematic priorities that address current health challenges.

There are clear indicators to monitor the progress made against the objectives and to regularly review the programme priorities. Improvements in knowledge and information sharing mechanisms will lead to better decision making in health policies at regional, national and European level. Better dissemination of results will help Member States and the health community to make better use of action under the programme. Finally, the implementation and management of the new health programme will be simplified, e.g. through electronic applications and smaller number of projects and actions.

The programme will support EU countries reform their health systems by promoting actions on the prevention of chronic and major diseases and the uptake of innovation in health such as Health Technology Assessment and eHealth.

It will also help Member States implement recently adopted health legislation, i.e. preparedness planning and response, in line with the Decision on serious cross-border health threats and setting up European Reference Networks as foreseen in the EU Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-border Healthcare. Implementation of EU rules on medicines and medical devices, on substances of human origin and on tobacco products and their advertising and marketing will also be monitored.

What are the priority objectives of the programme?

The programme aims to support and complement Member States' efforts to achieve four objectives:

Objective 1: **Promote health**, prevent diseases, and foster supportive environments for healthy lifestyles. In practice: identify, disseminate and promote the up-take of evidence-based and good practices for cost-effective disease prevention and health promotion measures by addressing in particular the key lifestyle related risk factors with a focus on the Union added value.

Objective 2: **Protect citizens from serious cross-border health threats** by identifying and developing coherent approaches and promoting their implementation for better preparedness and coordination in health emergencies.

Objective 3: Support public health capacity building and contribute to innovative, efficient and **sustainable health systems**. In practice: identify and develop tools and mechanisms at Union level to address shortages of resources, both human and financial, and facilitate the voluntary up-take of innovation in public health intervention and prevention strategies.

Objective 4: Facilitate access to **better and safer healthcare** for Union citizens. This would be achieved through increasing access to medical expertise and information for specific conditions, also beyond national borders. It would also entail helping to apply research results and developing tools for the improvement of healthcare quality and patient safety through, inter alia, actions contributing to improve health literacy.

What is the available budget and how will it be distributed?

The budget of the new Health Programme is € 449 394 000 (in current prices) for 2014-2020. This amount will be shared between the different objectives of the Programme throughout its duration. . As with the previous health programmes, funding will be provided through:

- Grants for action co-financed by the competent authorities responsible for public health in the Member States (called "Joint Actions")
- Grants for actions (projects) co-financed by other public, non-governmental or private bodies, including international health organisations.
- Grants for the functioning of non-governmental bodies.
- Procurement contracts.

In most cases, the grants will contribute 60% of the costs of the action/project. This figure rises to 80% in specific cases, e.g. Joint Actions with the involvement of Member States with a low Gross National Income. The specific criteria will be detailed in the annual work programme.

How will the programme help Europe emerge stronger from the economic crisis?

Health is a value in itself. It has a cost, but it is also an investment. Only a healthy population can achieve its full economic potential. The health sector is driven by innovation and a highly qualified workforce. It is one of the largest economic sectors in the EU and accounts for around 10% of the EU's Gross Domestic Product. The health care sector employs one in 10 workers.

Health therefore plays an important role in the Europe 2020 agenda. The new health programme emphasizes the potential of the health sector as a driver for economic growth and a generator of jobs. It will support innovation in health to support more efficient and sustainable health systems, as well as more sustainable and inclusive growth.

Who will be the main beneficiaries?

Potential candidates for funding are **national health authorities**, as well as **public and private bodies, international organisations and non-governmental organisations** with a general interest in health at EU level and which support the programme's specific objectives.

The Programme is open to all EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries, countries acceding to the EU, candidate countries and potential candidates, as well as countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy, as long as membership of the programme remains in accordance with the conditions of their bilateral or multilateral agreements.

When will the call for proposals be launched?

The call for proposals will be launched by the Consumer, Health and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA) immediately after the publication of the annual work programme 2014 which can be expected April/early May 2014 pending the adoption of the Health Programme Regulation in Council and the positive opinion of the newly established Programme Committee.

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/policy/index_en.htm

<http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/index.html>

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