

The innovative and sustainable hospital for the 21st century - "connecting the dots"

The challenge – develop the hospital into a "model" organisation

The health care system in Europe should not be considered only as a system which keeps or makes the citizens healthy, but also as a system which creates innovation, sustainable development and economic growth, as has been recently stressed by different EU initiatives.¹ **The hospital, which is an organisation that has as main objective to take care of citizens' health needs to develop into a "healthy organisation"** in terms health promotion, healthy work environment, empowerment that often leads to better health, healthy environmental management to ensure better health within our society and innovation to contribute to economic development. Hence, the hospital has some serious challenges ahead and it makes good sense to **develop the hospital into a model" of good practice.**

Why is this necessary?

- Because health is the greatest wealth of our society.
- Because hospitals very often are a big and important regional employer, but not necessarily use their potential to be an active player in regional development.
- Because public money should – with respect to tax payers and the well being of our society – be used efficiently and effectively.

To highlight and discuss these issues and identify good practice in the regions ERRIN's Health Working Group organised a conference on 2 March 2010 on "*The innovative and sustainable hospital for the 21st century – connecting the dots*". A briefing note together with the presentations from the event can be downloaded from: <http://errin.eu/en/calendar100843.html>

The event attracted more than 80 delegates from across the EU. It provided insight into regional strategies and good practices in:

- Health promotion as a means to improve quality and efficiency in hospitals,
- The importance of patient safety,
- Hospitals as responsible employers assisting in local/ regional development,
- Design and construction of CO2 neutral hospitals,
- Hospitals and health care systems as drivers of regional innovation

What were the main conclusions?

It was evident from the debate that there is a great need to map out the future role of hospitals by looking at hospitals' ability to anchor care, embrace good management, work with new knowledge and research, and adopt innovative changes, in effect to act as a model for others by demonstrating the effective use of public money, sustainable development while contributing to regional economic growth.

The overall conclusion from the event was that a concept of standards is missing, which could provide a basis for understanding how a hospital should be managed as a responsible and sustainable enterprise. The concept should capture standards on how hospitals can:

- Be an active player on the local / regional labour market,
- Be an active player in the local / regional research environment,
- Establish public / private partnerships and pre-commercial procurement, Use and implementation (,
- Enable health promotion among patients and staff,
- Promote a good working environment and empowerment of staff and patients,
- Ensure patient safety and cross-border care,
- Improve energy savings,
- Improve waste management.

What is the best way forward?

Joint projects are needed. Hence, ERRIN will facilitate the development of projects, including those of its member regions that already have experiences/expertise in the field of the innovative and sustainable development of hospitals. The idea could be elaborated within INTERREG, the Public Health Programme and/or FP7. The ERRIN Health Working Group will propose this idea to be integrated in the FP7 work programme for 2012 under the priority "3.2 Quality, efficiency and solidarity of healthcare systems including transitional health systems".

ERRIN, the European Regions Research and Innovation Network, is a dynamic network of currently more than 80 EU regions and their Brussels-based EU offices, coming from 18 countries.

The network facilitates knowledge exchange, joint action and project partnerships between its members, with the aim to strengthen their region's research and innovation capacities.

ERRIN aspires to influence EU policies in order to make them respond better to the needs of European regions and to that end engages in debate with EU institutions. ERRIN members meet regularly in thematic working groups and at key network events to exchange information and know-how about EU funding and project opportunities, present regional good practice, build transnational consortia and develop joint projects.

ERRIN is also partner to key strategic coordination actions and projects of benefit to all ERRIN members.

ERRIN's work is carried out through various working groups focusing on a range of fields (e.g. ITC, Energy, Biotechnology, Transport etc); one of which is ours, namely, the Health group. As a part of our activities we organise information sessions on EU legislation, practitioners' days for project development, and events to raise the profile of the regions as well as exchange best practice.

To access the website please visit:
<http://www.errin.eu/en/>

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Who we would like to involve? Regions, hospitals, universities, consultants with experience with energy, waste management and working environments, and international groups such as the WHO, as well as the European Commission and the European Parliament.

¹ **Relevant EU initiatives:**

- In 2005, **Healthy Life Years (HLY)** was included as a Lisbon Structural Indicator, to underline that the population's life expectancy in *good health* – not just length of life – **is a key factor for economic growth.**
- The Council in its conclusions on **common values and principles in European Union Health Systems** in 2006 stated that the health systems of the European Union are a central part of Europe's high levels of social protection, and **contribute** to social cohesion and social justice as well as **to sustainable development.**
- The EU Strategy **"Together for Health"**, published in 2007, highlights that Health policy at Community level should foster good health, protect citizens from threats, and **support sustainability;** one of the overall objectives of the strategy is to support the **development of dynamic health systems and new technologies.**

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND CASE-STUDIES (ERRIN 2 MARCH 2010)

WHO, WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION - HEALTH PROMOTING HOSPITALS: The network of Health Promoting Hospitals is hosted by WHO and has about 800 hospitals as members. The overall aim is to gain better health through integration of health promotion among staff and patients. Evidence shows that treatment in hospitals has a higher success if patients lead a healthy lifestyle, hence hospitals should put more effort into assisting patients to cut smoking and drinking before.

HOPE, EUROPEAN HOSPITAL AND HEALTHCARE FEDERATION: provided an overview of what a hospital actually is, how it has developed over time and how different standards are throughout Europe. It also provided an overall understanding of how the hospital can be a responsible organisation.

CIRCLE is a patient-focused professional service organization, which is owned 50% by its staff and 50% by investors. The organisation constructs and manages hospitals and the focus is on staff and patient involvement to provide high quality care.

CASE-STUDY BIRMGINGHAM/WEST-MIDLANDS: The Queens Elisabeth hospital in Birmingham is a new flagship hospital that has been designed not only to deliver high quality care but also to contribute to growth and regeneration in a region affected by decline of manufacturing and where health is a big player in the local/regional economy.

CASE-STUDY DENMARK: ASSOCIATION OF DANISH REGIONS: Denmark faces a new era within the development and construction of hospitals and the occasion is used by Denmark to design hospitals which are living up to modern standards. **ESBENSEN CONSULTING** has participated in several European projects, where the design and construction of CO2 neutral hospitals was the objective. The conclusion from many of the projects is that significant energy savings can be created and that it is more sustainable to work with existing sites than building new ones, if no other reasons prevail.

CASE-STUDY VÄSTRA GOTLAND: In this Swedish region, innovation and health care are seen together, and the region has created the "The Health Care Innovation Gateway" with the main objective to strengthen the region's capacity to stimulate, validate and manage innovative ideas within health care organisations. An important issue for this region is that focus should not only be on making profit, but an overall change in the working culture in the region.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, DG SANCO: Patient Safety has been a European focus since 2005 and is especially important in relation to cross-border care in order to ensure that patients in Europe are guaranteed quality care and patient safety no matter where they receive their treatment.