



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health, country knowledge, crisis management  
**Health programme and chronic diseases**

## Flash note 11 April 2018

The Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases (the Steering Group) met today for the fourth time.

DG SANTE up-dated the Member States' representatives about recent activities, including an inter-service meeting on the Steering Group. It also announced that the 2018 Health Award for NGOs is dedicated to reward initiatives aiming to stop young people from taking up smoking and using other forms of tobacco.

Representatives from the future EU Presidencies (Austria, Romania and Finland) presented their priorities in the field of health.

The participants also received up-dates about the steps taken for the implementation of best practices selected by the Steering Group in 2017. For the "orphacodes" initiative, a call for proposals for projects is currently open under the Health Programme. Sweden reported about the plans for transferring the "physical activity on prescription" best practice and Italy on the "CARDIO 50" – cardiovascular screening – best practice. The Structural Reform Support Service reported on foreseen funding for 3 Member States to provide technical support for setting-up population-based colorectal cancer screening.

In the 2018 round of selecting best practices for co-funding, the Member States decided that the focus should be on nutrition and physical activity. Member States will indicate their priorities among 12 best practices that were presented to them in a marketplace workshop in Ispra, Italy 15-16 March 2018 via an online questionnaire.

The European Investment Bank asked DG SANTE that the Steering Group would look into the issue of proton therapy centres in the EU. Member States agreed in principle that a sub-group of the Steering Group on this issue would be set up and are invited to provide DG SANTE with their point of view in writing following the discussion at the meeting.

The participants also discussed future work of the Steering Group including specific actions such as the "Orphanet" portal for rare diseases and criteria for the selection of key research projects co-funded under HORIZON 2020 which could be scaled-up.

DG SANTE also made a presentation on the formalization of the Steering Group as a European Commission Expert Group, which is currently in the final stages.

Finally, Commissioner Andriukaitis addressed the participants, highlighting that the time has come to focus efforts on promoting good health; so that people can live and work in good health, and continue contributing to society as they grow older. Investing in good health pays

off – in terms of fostering a productive workforce; preventing avoidable chronic diseases and their associated healthcare and social costs; reducing absenteeism and early retirement.

He stressed that the Steering Group as a horizontal platform will be instrumental to ensure concrete action as effective health promotion and disease prevention measures require strong political will.

He also welcomed the fact that the Steering Group had decided on nutrition and physical activity as a focus for best practices in 2018 and encouraged the members

- to seek and create ways to bridge health with other sectors;
- to show its added value and positive impact for individuals and communities, also in social and economic terms; and
- to help keep health high on the European political agenda.

The next meeting of the Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases is planned for November 2018.