

## ESIP Press release



The European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP), representing statutory social security institutions in 17 Member States and Switzerland, welcomes the initiative of the European Commission to raise the profile of health at EU level, in particular with the proposed Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.

Recognising the impact of demographic change and increasing levels of chronic disease, healthcare payers represented by ESIP welcome the upcoming Commission Plan and stand ready to support the European Commission in its elaboration. Indeed, healthcare payers have a role to play in each of the stages highlighted by the Commissioner for Health, Stella Kyriakides: prevention, treatment, long-term care and not forgetting rehabilitation.

ESIP supports and promotes a holistic approach to health and welcomes this approach underpinning the Plan. Healthcare payers have consistently advocated, most recently in our [position paper on the future of EU health policy](#), for greater attention to several aspects which are keeping with the main elements of the future Plan:

- With a view to the concept of **health in all policies**, ESIP continues to call for a high level of human health promotion and prevention in all EU policies since this is part of the EU's mandate in accordance with EU Treaties. A health in all policies approach to the Beating Cancer Plan is welcome and should help ensure its effectiveness.
- Regarding the use of **prevention and health promotion to reduce preventable cancers**, ESIP supports initiatives in prevention and health promotion at national and EU level, including through the exchange of best practices, with attention to the transferability of those practices.
- With respect to improving **access to cancer treatments**, ESIP continues to advocate for access to affordable medicines and medical devices, for which the Commission was granted a clear mandate in the [Council Conclusions of 2016](#). Healthcare payers would like to draw attention to necessary safeguards, in particular the need to strengthen pricing and reimbursement mechanisms and to review the framework of incentives for health technology developers, in order to

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put the focus on access to high-quality and affordable healthcare in the context of sustainable health systems. In addition, the fast-track approval of drugs should remain strictly regulated to ensure their efficacy and safety for patients.

- As regards **access to innovative cancer treatments and clinical trials**, ESIP recalls its position that public investment in research and innovation is necessary to meet the challenges of an ageing population and increasing prevalence of chronic disease as well as cancer, but that it should be linked to full transparency around funding and costs. Importantly, only open access and open data requirements can ensure that the knowledge acquired during clinical trials can be made widely accessible to all researchers and to the general public.
- In the context of ensuring the **quality of life of cancer survivors**, ESIP would like to express once again the importance of rehabilitation and return to work strategies. As advocated previously, early intervention and the active involvement of employers are necessary for the implementation of effective return to work strategies. In addition, as social insurers, we must not forget the **quality of life and work-life balance of carers**, especially from a gender equality perspective, since this remains overwhelmingly a role undertaken by women.
- Concerning the **use of data and eHealth**, ESIP would like to recall the need for EU standards to facilitate the cross-border exchange of health records and e-prescriptions, and for support for the interoperability of national e-health infrastructures. Moreover, while ESIP recognises the potential of digital tools to improve the accessibility, quality and affordability of care, we must address the digital divide to ensure that e-health can help reduce inequalities. Healthcare payers are proposing concrete solutions to improve digital health literacy, which is of utmost importance.



**“Healthcare payers have a role to play at every stage of the future Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan and we stand ready to support the European Commission.”**

**Ilka Wölfle**  
ESIP President

ESIP looks forward to the opportunity to exchange with the European Commission and other stakeholders in contributing to the future Plan.

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