

Implementing People-Centred Health Promotion Services in Healthcare Settings

Written statement for WHO Europe RC67 related to item 5a on the Agenda by the International HPH Network and the Clinical Health Promotion Centre (WHO-CC for Evidence-Based Health Promotion in Hospitals & Health Services).

The International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals & Health Services (HPH Network) has worked closely in line with Health 2020 and the European Action Plan for Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services with the aim to increase healthcare-based delivery of public health services to improve health of patients and communities.

Why put focus on the health services?

The healthcare sector is in a good position to act as knowledge-hub for championing more healthy lives – due to its high number of staff, fast-paced job-mobility for especially junior staff, and due to its considerable work with research and training.

Health services play a key role because they, and their staff, are often at the very core of real-life efforts. They can produce tangible and significant positive influences on health-related behaviours of patients and relatives.

This is the case because:

- a) Health promotion becomes more relevant when illness is experienced first-hand, and healthcare staff has the advantage that patients due to their situation and acute risk often are more likely and responsive to programmes offered.
- b) Over the course of a calendar year, half of the average European will be in contact with the healthcare system for examination, vaccination, diagnosis, intervention, follow-up, rehabilitation or other services.
- c) Four in five adult patients have one or more lifestyle risk factors that influence their treatment and prospects, such as daily smoking, physical inactivity, hazardous alcohol consumption or nutritional problems.

What can hospitals do on short term?

Hospitals have a key role and potential to increase delivery of public health services with tangible effect.

WHO Regional Office for Europe, Division of Health Systems and Public Health and the International HPH Network are currently working on an update of the document: Implementing health promotion in hospitals: Manual and self-assessment forms (2006). The update delivers easy to implement standards and models for implementing health promotion into clinical practice – and the update now includes health services as well as hospitals.

Thus the new updated Manual is developed to work across sectors and make the validated tools applicable to setting where the focus on health promotion is needed.

What can hospitals do on long term?

Europe's burden of disease is strongly related to smoking, alcohol, overweight, malnutrition and physical inactivity. Healthcare-based public health service delivery can help reduce this burden of disease and improve public health on long-term.

Hospitals has the opportunity to help build the much needed capacity and momentum for such changes in general, through being a major contact-point for citizens in need of help and a training-hub for all types of healthcare staff.

How can member countries support their hospitals to do this?

Hospitals and health services are at the core of treatment and cure, and when it comes to patient-centred health promotion, they are more than willing in playing their part.

Health promotion needs to be more widespread and better integrated. And we hope that each delegation will return home at the end of this Regional Committee, to your respective countries and health systems, and here champion this change.

The focus of the HPH Network is to embed public health service delivery in healthcare, and by supporting hospitals to implement health promotion, their efforts in this field can be scaled up, and in turn, significantly benefit patients and society.

Contact the HPH Network to find out how your office can help hospitals in your country

Visit our website: www.hphnet.org or contact us at info@hphnet.org,