

Health makes the cut of the new European Commission

EPHA and EPF welcome appointment of Stella Kyriakides and encourage more ambition on health

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and the European Patients Forum (EPF) welcome Ursula von der Leyen's effort to reflect people's everyday concerns by retaining a Commissioner for health in her new team. Stella Kyriakides' knowledge of the European-level health field and understanding of patient-advocacy is a strong base for future collaboration between the Commission and civil society in the interest of public health.

Access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines is a priority for Europeans and a key commitment of the EU under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the European Pillar of Social Rights. We look forward to supporting the European Commission to work further on guaranteeing better and affordable medicines, tackling patients' growing concerns over medicines shortages and the proposed health DG's new role in overseeing the regulation of medical devices and pharmaceuticals. We call on Ms Kyriakides to develop a framework to ensure patients' and citizens' empowerment through e-health and the European Health Data Space.

EPHA and EPF, as part of a coalition of civil society organisations (EU4Health), have consistently called for a common approach to Europe-wide challenges where the EU can bring added value to complement national actions. We welcome the positive message on action on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and vaccination. However, we call upon the Commissioner-designate to take a more ambitious approach on these issues, for example through concrete and measurable goals and targets in the One Health Action Plan. We call on her to recognise that there are many more areas where the European Union and Member States can cooperate to address the unprecedented health challenges we face, for example the need for EU-level action to prevent diseases and promote healthy lifestyles, a framework for tackling non-communicable diseases that will ensure equitable access to high-quality healthcare, a strategy for a transition to a healthy food system and assessing the impact on health of EU policies.

We welcome the strong focus on delivering the health SDG, and we hope that the Commissioner-designate will support our calls for monitoring and benchmarking health systems in Member States.

We look forward to hearing more about Ms Kyriakides' plans during the European Parliament Commissioner hearing process, and to working with her for better health for all in Europe.

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The **European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)** is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), and the Better Regulation Watchdog. <http://www.eph.org/>

The **European Patients' Forum (EPF)** was founded in 2003 to ensure that the patients' community drives policies and programmes that affect patients' lives to bring changes empowering them to be equal citizens in the EU. EPF reflects the voice of an estimated 150 million patients affected by various chronic diseases throughout Europe. www.eu-patient.eu