



Nothing About Us, Without Us!

PRESS RELEASE

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ECPC works in Partnership to reduce cancer in Europe by 15% in 2020.

On 13th and 14th October, the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) held the ECPC Cancer Summit *Making the Cancer Partnership Work*. ECPC brought together cancer patients, patient organisations and healthcare specialists from across the European member states to discuss the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer, which was launched by the European Commission in September 2009.

The ECPC Summit centred on the themes of cancer prevention, cross-border collaboration, sharing best-practice, cancer research and inequalities in healthcare provision. In his keynote address, Health Commissioner John Dalli highlighted the importance of cancer care in the EU, with 2.5 million Europeans being diagnosed with cancer each year. Recognising that significant progress is required to ensure that patients across Europe are guaranteed the same quality of care, he emphasised the European Commission's commitment to cancer prevention, screening and sharing of information between member states. This commitment is represented by the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer which aims to reduce cancer by 15% by 2020. Commissioner Dalli places cancer patients at the centre of the Partnership and is committed to providing the momentum and energy required for change in approaches to cancer across the EU.

Paola Testori Coggi, Director General of DG SANCO, presented her vision for the creation of Centres of Excellence across the EU which will assist the Partnership to spread best practice in cancer research and control. By avoiding duplication of effort and maximising the resources available during these times of economic difficulty, Ms Coggi believes that the EU will soon see the benefits of the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer in significantly reducing cancer rates. ECPC also has strong support from European Parliament, with 74 Members of the European Parliament endorsing their work through the Forum Against Cancer in Europe initiative (FACE - <http://www.forumagainstcancer.eu/>) and Marisa Matias MEP, Nessa Childers MEP and Linda McAvan MEP, all FACE Champions giving passionate speeches confirming their commitment to take action against cancer in Europe with cancer patients.

The focus of the ECPC Cancer Summit 2010 was on the role of the patient within the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer. Tom Hudson, President of ECPC, outlined the work that ECPC was doing to represent the voice of patient associations in the Partnership. ECPC is committed to the principle of *i-Pat*, a patient who is informed about their cancer care and plays an active role in determining their treatment. Spokespersons for patient associations from across the European Union called for patients to be treated as proactive individuals whose views were taken into account in all aspects of the fight against cancer, from the management of clinical trials to the formulation of member state National Cancer Plans.

The Summit recognised the great inequalities that exist within healthcare in Europe and patient organisations campaigned for the standardisation and harmonisation of member state National Cancer Plans as a means to address these inequalities. However, patients also noted that many cancer patients cannot wait 20 years for healthcare policies and cancer research to deliver the treatment they require immediately. Therefore, patients also highlighted the importance of the availability of cross-border healthcare.

The ECPC Cancer Summit 2010 embodied the drive and enthusiasm of ECPC and their cancer patient associations. ECPC's strong connections with NGOs, politicians and the medical industry will ensure that the European Partnership for Action Against Cancer will adopt a patient-centred approaches, meaning *"nothing about us, without us!"*.

About ECPC

Established in 2003, The European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC) is the **voice** of the European cancer patient community, **uniquely** representing the interests of all cancer patient groups from the major to the rarer cancers. It has been established **to represent the views of cancer patients** in the European healthcare debate and to provide a forum for European cancer patients to exchange information and share best practice experiences.

ECPC represents over 300 patients' organizations across Europe. **ECPC is run and governed by patients**. It is registered as a non-profit association in the Netherlands. During the last legislative period, ECPC has already provided the Members of the European Parliament with a platform to discuss issues of relevance and to communicate to their constituents. It has continued this fruitful dialogue with the launch of the *Forum Against Cancer Europe (FACE)*.

ECPC receives funding in the forms of EU grants, donations and unrestricted corporate grants, following strict transparency policies.

Further information about ECPC can be found at <http://www.ecpc-online.org> and <http://www.forumagainstcancer.eu> and <http://www.cancerpartnership.eu>

About the European Partnership for Action against Cancer

The European Partnership for Action Against Cancer was initiated by the EU Commission in September 2009 with the support of a number of stakeholders like ECPC, bringing together the Commission, Member States and their Ministries of Health, patient organisations, health professionals, scientists, private industry and civil society. It has embarked on an ambitious agenda of a pan-European collaborative effort to tackle cancer more evenly and effectively across the EU.

Further information can be found at <http://www.ecpc-online.org/health-in-eu/cancer-partnership.html>

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