

WORKING GROUP ON NATIONAL CANCER PLANS MEETING

Ljubljana, 29 September, 13.30 – 17.30

Minutes

The Leader of Work Package 10, Tit Albreht, presented the status of the National Cancer Plans Work Package. The Preliminary Report on the National Cancer Plan questionnaires has already been completed and circulated to Member State representatives for their comments prior to the meeting.

It was decided that the completed questionnaires themselves would not be published, except for those Member States who would require so, whereas the National Cancer Plans would be published on the website, www.epaac.eu. **Work Package 10 again requested that all available materials (cancer plans or other relevant documents) be sent to them in order to include them on the website.**

By June 2011, completed questionnaires had been received from all countries. The first draft report was also prepared by the Open Forum in Madrid (June 2011) and discussed with the Core Working Group (consisting of the countries: Slovenia, Italy, Malta, Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands). The preliminary report was circulated to all countries, the deadline for comments and feedback was extended to 31 August 2011.

The first general results of the preliminary report are that 24 out of the 29 surveyed countries have a National Cancer Plan. Different terms are used for this in different countries, including 'plan', 'strategy', etc. 12 out of these 24 National Cancer Plans were recently adopted, between the years 2008 and 2011, 3 out of 12 were adopted in this current year (2011). The methodology for the creation of the plan appears to have been to consult expert opinion in most cases (16 out of 24). On average, two years was needed for the creation of a National Cancer Plan. Various resources were also involved in the creation of a National Cancer Plan, including political, policy and scientific decisions.

All countries will be given 1 month following the Working Group meeting, until the end of October 2011, to send any comments and feedback on the draft report to the Work Package 10 team and Slovenian coordinators at the e-mail address partnership.cancer@ivz-rs.si. All comments will be duly noted; following this step, the report will be finalised and as a formal deliverable of the Joint Action.

Regarding dissemination of the report, the report will be published on the EPAAC website. It will also be disseminated at the political level (e.g. to the Council Senior Level Working Group on Public Health). Members of the Working Group also agreed that there would be a high added value of publishing the report as a shorter academic text to be published in an academic journal.

A *tour de table* was conducted, in which Member State Representatives were invited to express their opinions on the draft report. Many Member States expressed satisfaction, while also noting that they would be reviewing their country's answers and sending comments by the set deadline, if necessary. A discussion also began on the terminology surrounding National Cancer Plans as well as the way results would be displayed in the report (tabular, ranking, etc.). The European Commission also noted that this report is a deliverable of an overall approach which would allow Member States to learn from each other and exchange best practices; in this sense, the report could be a pilot for other chronic diseases.

In the second part of the meeting the Working Group was divided into three smaller groups in order to explore indicators with some guidance that the criteria for indicators for the effectiveness of National Cancer Plans were that they should be descriptive and partly explorative. They should also already be in existence and aim at population goals. The number of chosen indicators should not exceed 20.

Based on these first and preliminary discussions on indicators the three smaller groups reported that the indicators should measure the long-term success of a National Cancer Plan as well as measure the success of cancer care and control in the country (primary prevention, coverage of screening programmes, response rates, socio-economic differences, etc.). Three groups of indicators were prepared.

The outcome of this discussion will feed into the initial paper on indicators for measuring the effectiveness of National Cancer Plans that will be prepared by the Core Working Group and presented at the next meeting of the Working Group on National Cancer Plans. Given that some time is needed for the preparation, the date of the next meeting of the Working Group is yet to be determined. Members will be duly informed.