Editorial

# European Cooperation on Healthcare

European cooperation is crucial for providing the highest possible quality of healthcare for the ~740 million citizens on the continent. Examples include movement of people seeking education, training and work in health-related sectors [1]; regulation of medicines and vaccines and pharmacovigilance – monitoring their safety - overseen by the European Medicines Agency, in partnership with responsible national authorities across the countries of the European Union [2]; and the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) system, which enables EU citizens to obtain free healthcare while working or on holiday in countries across the Eurozone [3].

Initiatives aimed at enhancing safety in the use of medicines include innovative app-based projects aimed at early warning of adverse effects of new or repurposed medicines [4] and Europol coordinated activities such as cross-border checks for transit of counterfeit and substandard medicines [5]. Innovations in European healthcare also have a vital impact on global health through partnerships with international regulators and funders. The European Union has provided major funding for research programmes and projects, many with external international partners, recently through its Horizon 2020 initiatives [6] and earlier framework funding programmes, as well as, for example, the public-private Innovative Medicines Initiative [7].

Many international organizations and institutes participate in these and other European projects and initiatives on research, clinical care and health policy to achieve health goals that would be unattainable when operating solely within one's own country. There are also funding, ethical and political challenges to effective European cooperation on healthcare, including an impending possible Brexit [8]. These include risk to the supply of short half-life diagnostic and therapeutic radiopharmaceuticals to and from the EU [9]. The possible loss of the EHIC for travellers to and from the UK could increase the cost of travel insurance, especially for older age groups, some of whom may no longer be able to travel due to unaffordable health coverage [10, 11].

A conference on European Cooperation on Healthcare workshop is being held on 21 June 2019 at Erasmus University in Rotterdam to provide a forum for discussing best practice and challenges across these key healthcare domains [12]. The conference is being jointly hosted by the Health Policy and Technology journal and its parent organisation, the Fellowship of Postgraduate Medicine (FPM), in partnership with the Erasmus School of Health Policy and Technology (ESHPM).

The conference is of interest to a broad range of presenters and delegates, from health policy makers to healthcare professionals, patient organizations, researchers, and other experts from the biotech, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics and e-Health sectors. This one day conference will be held at the Erasmus Expo and Conference Centre on the Woudestein campus of Erasmus University Rotterdam, near the city centre of Rotterdam.

Registration for the meeting and online abstract submission are now open [12]. Registration is free for abstract presenters and there are reduced rates for research students and trainees, for HPT or PMJ authors and reviewers, and for FPM Fellows or Associate Members. Abstracts are welcome on current or completed activities relevant to European cooperation on healthcare, irrespective of their funding or scope [12]. The final abstract deadline is 25th May 2019, however authors will be notified of acceptance within 2 weeks of online abstract submission. Accepted abstracts will be published online in Health Policy and Technology, an official journal of the FPM. There will be a prize for the best abstract.

Potential abstract topics include but are not restricted to actions of health professional societies, clinical epidemiology, clinical guidelines, clinical registries, cross-border partnerships by health funders, e-health activities, ensuring safe supply chains for medicines, diagnostics and devices, ethical issues, European clinical research projects and programmes, global health initiatives, international health policy, health surveillance including pharmacovigilance, health technology assessment, initiatives by European patient organizations, international biomedical and health professional education and training, protecting public health, quality improvements in clinical practice, rare diseases and orphan drugs, regulatory matters, resolving health inequalities and transborder healthcare.

Confirmed speakers include **Carin Uyl-de Groot**, Professor of Health Technology Assessment, Erasmus School of Health Policy & Management, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, **Zoltan Kalo**, Professor of Health Economics, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest, Hungary, **Barbara Pierscionek**, Associate Dean for Research, Nottingham Trent University, **Marcus Guardian**, Chief Operating Officer of EUnetHTA and **Ron de Winter**, Professor, Department of Epidemiology, University Medical Center, Utrecht, The Netherlands.

See the conference website [12] for how to submit an abstract or register as a delegate and for more information about the speakers and the programme.

Donald RJ Singer
*President, Fellowship of Postgraduate Medicine, London, UK*

Lytske Bakker\*, Ken Redekop
*Erasmus School of Health Policy and Management, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands*

\*Corresponding author. Burgemeester Oudlaan 50, 3062 PA Rotterdam, The Netherlands
*E-mail address:* bakker@eshpm.eur.nl (L. Bakker)

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