

North West Summary EU Health Issues

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LATEST NEWS FROM BRUSSELS

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OR QUERIES CONCERNING
THIS SUMMARY PLEASE
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HEALTH BRUSSELS OFFICE

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DID YOU KNOW?

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the NWHBO
FORTNIGHTLY
FACT!

Health and Safety

TITLE: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT REJECTS EU REGULATION ON SUNLIGHT

BRIEF: The European Parliament rejected the proposal for an EU regulation to protect workers from sun-burn. The dossier has now moved to the European Council.

ISSUE: There are four separate directives as part of a wider package, those on mechanical vibration, noise, and electromagnetic fields have already been passed, with the directive on the optical radiation, still remaining. The Directive lays down minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from optical radiation and aims for prevention and early diagnosis of damage to the eyes and prevention of long-term health dangers. It lays down exposure limit values and requires employers to carry out risk assessments and to set up an action plan if a risk is identified. It also includes provisions on workers' rights to information, training, consultation and health checks. Parliament has put forward amendments to the directive. Businesses are generally against the directive as they feel that imposing EU-level obligations to regulate exposure to sunlight would be unrealistic and unnecessary.

ACTIONS: The proposal is now sent to the Council, who has three months to react to the amendments of the Parliament. If the Council accepts the Parliament's amendments, the directive is adopted, however this is not likely. If the Council rejects Parliament's amendments, they then have six to eight weeks to find a compromise solution.

For the European Parliament press release please see:

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade3?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+DN-20050907-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&L=EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=X&LSTDOC=N#SECTION2>

TITLE: EUROPEAN HEALTH AND SAFETY - DISCUSSION PAPER PUBLISHED

BRIEF: DG Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission has published a new discussion paper called, "Maximising the Contribution of Science to European Health and Safety".

ISSUE: The document from the Commission aims to define the role of science in the work of DG Health and Consumer Affairs and seeks to maximise this role. The paper will also entail a stakeholder discussion on the potential and limits of science concerning EU health and safety policy. The document outlines measures that will be taken to: enhance the contribution of science to DG Health and Consumer Protection's objectives; improve risk assessment capacity; ensure that available data is fully and effectively gathered; and assure quality and transparency in risk assessments. It also outlines new internal roles within the DG, created to follow up on the ideas in the paper.

ACTIONS: This All stakeholders are invited to comment on the paper, which can be accessed at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health_consumer/library/reports/science_health_safety_en.pdf

For more information please contact the NWHBO health@nwhbo.org

Events Calendar 2005

Date	Place	Event
21 September 2005	London, UK	UK Presidency Event on Platform for Action on Diet and Physical Activity
23 September 2005	North West, UK	Public Health Day in NW of England
23–25 September 2005	Athens, Greece	From Parents to Children: The Impact of Parental Mental Illness on Children
5-8 October 2005	Gastein, Austria	Gastein Conference
13-14 October 2005	Edinburgh, UK	Protecting Patients: Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders
17-18 October 2005	London, UK	Tackling Health Inequalities: Governing For Health Summit
20-21 October 2005	Brussels, Belgium	DoH Ministerial Conference - Coreper 1 & 11
20-21 October 2005	Rickmansworth, UK	Informal meeting of Ministers for Health
25-27 October 2005	London, UK	EPPOSI Workshop, Partnering for Rare Disease therapy development
26-28 October 2005	Venice, Italy	Cross border Healthcare Conference
31 October 2005	Brussels, Belgium	Jurgen Schefflein addressing European Regions on Mental Health Green Paper
3-4 November 2005	Brussels, Belgium	Employment, Social Affairs and Health & Consumer Affairs Council
7-8 November 2005	Brussels, Belgium	DG Health & Consumer Affairs Open Forum
9-10 November 2005	Brussels, Belgium	'Future Europeans' The right start in life for children and young people in Europe
9-12 November 2005	Graz, Austria	EUPHA Conference 2005
18 November 2005	Cork, Ireland	NWRA European Conference
21-23 November 2005	Brussels / Luxembourg	NW Public Health Trainees Visit to Brussels & Luxembourg
28-30 November 2005	London, UK	Patient Safety Summit
8-9 December 2005	Brussels, Belgium	Employment, Social Affairs and Health & Consumer Affairs Council
8-9 December 2005	Scotland, UK	Tackling Health Inequalities and Social exclusion in Europe
12 December 2005	Leeds, UK	Northern Way Conference—Health Planning

Physical Activity

DID YOU KNOW?

The highest healthy life expectancy in Europe is 73.4 years, belonging to San Marino.



TITLE: EUROPEAN MOBILITY WEEK

BRIEF: European Mobility week is taking place across Europe between the 16 and 22 September 2005, with 61 UK cities and towns participating in the scheme.

ISSUE: During this European Mobility week, which takes place on annual basis, European citizens will have the opportunity to enjoy a full week of events dedicated to sustainable mobility. The objective is to facilitate widespread debate on the necessity for changes in behaviour in relation to mobility and in particular the use of the private car. As usual, the Car Free Day will be the highlight of the whole Week.

ACTIONS: If you wish to find out more about the project please see:

<http://www.mobilityweek-europe.org/>

Please also feel free to contact the NWHBO on this issue. health@nwhbo.org

Gender Health

TITLE: GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN HEART DISEASE

BRIEF: A Euro Heart Survey has found major gender differences in research, diagnosis and treatment of cardiovascular disease, in particular citing that women are less likely to be investigated for heart disease than men - and when they are, they are already more sick and do less well in treatment.

ISSUE: Heart disease is the biggest cause of death for men and women in the European Union. More women die of cardiovascular disease than of all cancers (including breast cancer) combined. The European Commission Heart Health Conference held in June 2005 resulted in a plan to promote cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention measures across Europe. The European Society of Cardiology held its annual congress for 2005 in early September, with its main aim being to improve understanding of and address issues surrounding women and cardiovascular disease (CDV). The congress examined the results of the Euro Heart Survey considering gender differences and found that major differences exist in the diagnosis and treatment of CDV between men and women.

ACTIONS: For more information on the 'Heart Health Conference' in June please see:

<http://www.escardio.org/NR/rdonlyres/97677661-EEA7-4AA3-81C3-1B59C2D6A542/0/LuxembourgDeclaration.pdf>

For information from the World Health Organisation on Gender see: <http://www.who.int/topics/gender/en/>

For the European Society of Cardiology - 2005 Congress press release see:

http://www.escardio.org/vpo/ESC_congress_information/ConferenceReleases/CPreleases/Lenzen.htm

Environment

TITLE: ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH LINK IS STRONGER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT

BRIEF: Environmental exposure may play a more significant role in causing disease than previously thought according to European Environment Agency

ISSUE: Currently figures show that 2% to 5% of European mortalities are attributable to environmental factors. Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA) Professor Jacqueline McGlade presented methods of analysis and research on links between environment and health, suggesting that these methods are not currently sufficient and that the impacts of environmental factors on health may be higher than previously expected. She warned particularly of the dangers to children, citing air pollution, noise, chemicals and electromagnetic fields that are harmless to adults may in fact bring permanent damage to the developing bodies of children.

ACTIONS: For more information please contact health@nwhbo.org

Nutrition and Food Policy

TITLE: EFSA REPORT ON ILLEGAL TOXIC DYES IN FOOD

BRIEF: The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is aiming to publish the 'most likely' illegal colorants in food.

ISSUE: A recent report by EFSA examined the toxicity of illegal dyes in food. This report came after the European Commission asked EFSA to carry out a review of toxicological data in food. The review published on the 12 September 2005 confirms the toxicity of seven illegal dyes and lists 13 other industrial colorants which could raise concern if used illegally in food. The EFSA review provides a detailed toxicological review for each dye, in terms of genotoxicity, carcinogenicity and chemical similarities. The review has identified 'the most likely' illegal colorants in food and, this way, assists member states, who cannot systematically monitor all dyes.

ACTIONS: For the European Food Safety Authority Press release on this issue please see:

http://www.efsa.eu.int/press_room/press_release/1129_en.html

For more information on this please contact the NWHBO. health@nwhbo.org

Children and Youth Policy

TITLE: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTES IN FAVOUR OF THE PAEDIATRIC MEDICINES DIRECTIVE

BRIEF: The European Parliament plenary has confirmed the Parliament Environment Committee's (ENVI) stand on the Paediatric Medicines Directive and has voted in favour.

ISSUE: This regulation aims to stimulate research into and development of medicines for children and guarantee that medicines administered to children are suitable for them. This requires pharmaceutical companies to conduct clinical trials involving children before authorisation of drugs. As compensation for these extra costs and as incentive for more R&D, the companies will be granted a six-month extension of their patent. The Parliament also backed the ENVI Committee's wish to see the European Medicines Agency (EMA) establish a network of researchers to avoid duplicating research or tests on children and called for the creation of a special EU programme for research into medicines for children (Medicines Investigation for the Children of Europe).

ACTIONS: For more information on this, please contact the NWHBO health@nwhbo.org

For the European Parliament press release see:

<http://www.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade3?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+DN-20050907-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&L=EN&LEVEL=2&NAV=X&LSTDOC=N#SECTION4>

To monitor the progress of this regulation please see:

http://europa.eu.int/prelex/detail_dossier_real.cfm?CL=en&DosId=191868

TITLE: WHO EUROPEAN HEALTH REPORT 2005 PUBLISHED

BRIEF: The WHO has recently published a report entitled The European health report 2005 'Public health action for healthier children and populations'.

ISSUE: The report summarises the major public health issues facing the WHO Regions for Health, particularly its children, and describes effective policy responses. The report concentrates on several issues of importance including health inequalities between regions, countries and socio-economic groups, stating that in many cases these inequalities have widened. The report goes on to say that reducing inequality is increasingly vital due to declining birth rates and growing elderly populations, and that it is now children whose health should now be of the up most priority. It comments that investing in children's health and development is not only a key to the future health of the population but will also reduce inequalities within it.

ACTIONS: For more information please contact the NWHBO health@nwhbo.org

For an executive summary of the report see: <http://www.who.dk/document/ehr05/e87325execsum.pdf>

TITLE: FUTURE EUROPEANS CONFERENCE—REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

BRIEF: The registration for the 'Future Europeans' Conference is now open. The North West of England has been awarded the role of workshop coordinator in the conference and is helping to coordinate and organise the event.

ISSUE: As previously reported by the NWHBO, this major multinational conference will be held in Brussels on the 9-10 November 2005. The event will bring together 150 representatives from across Europe and will feed into key EU initiatives such as a European Commission Communication on implementation of children's rights, the YOUTH PACT, a Communication on the health of young people and other EU activities that impact on children. The conference is affiliated with the UK Presidency of the EU and will aim to examine the area of health inequalities. The North West of England Region put forward some excellent plans and ideas for the conference and as a result have been awarded the coordinator role for workshop 6, 'Teenagers and young people, supporting healthy behaviour patterns.'

ACTIONS: The deadline for registration is 26 October at 16.00 Brussels time. However, the organisers expect great interest in Future Europeans and you are therefore recommended to register early. There will be no opportunity to register after the deadline or on the day.

For more information please contact health@nwhbo.org or see www.children.ephia.org