

Fruitful meeting with European Commission on EU-level standardisation in health care



(1st March 2018) On 28 February EPSU and a broad range of healthcare stakeholders held a fruitful exchange with the European Commission regarding the development of healthcare standards by the European standardisation body CEN.

Professional organisations, trade union organisations in healthcare and social insurance bodies/agencies do not support the development of EU standards in health services. There are concerns both about the choice of EU standards as regulatory instrument in areas where Member States have responsibility and about the process, including the procedures applied by CEN. For the last years EPSU and others have been very active in trying to influence the CEN standardisation initiatives and have taken part in a number of activities, including the CEN Health Services Focus Group (HSFG). The assessment of this experience is that while we

are listened to during meetings, our voices, concerns, arguments and written inputs as a rule are ignored. In the meeting the European Commission clearly stated that it is not supporting standardisation initiatives in health services either. The Commission has made this clear to CEN. However, the national standardisation bodies that members of CEN – a private body – are responsible for determining its activities. As an ‘industry to industry’ body, the European Commission has no means to influence its functioning. In the meeting there were discussions about how to bring more influence on CEN and its members and to develop a stronger regulatory framework for standardisation activities.

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