



**CPME Written statement to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe
65th session, Lithuania, 14-17 September 2015**

CPME welcomes the opportunity to submit a written statement to the sixty-fifth session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe. Please find below the CPME comments on the session's agenda items as well as links to the relevant CPME policies in these areas.

5(a) Promoting intersectoral and interagency action for health and well-being in the WHO European Region

CPME welcomes the progress reports on the implementation of the Health 2020 strategy. On the topic of environment and health, CPME strongly supports an increase in political and public awareness for the impacts on morbidity and mortality of policy decisions, in particular in policy areas such as energy and transport. To this end, CPME continues to appeal to decision-makers at EU and international level, most recently in a joint letter on the COP 21 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

A similar need for cross-sectoral awareness is a prerequisite for tackling the social determinants of health. CPME reiterates that policy action in particular in education, housing, pensions, transport, energy, personal finance and environment must be assessed against its impact on health and health inequalities.

Foreign policy is not exempt from the 'health in all policies' principle. CPME is conscious that on-going negotiations on trade agreements, for example the EU-US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), will potentially have significant impact on health and healthcare. CPME is convinced that economic stability in both the public and private sector and sustainable high quality healthcare are mutually dependent. At the same time, there is an urgent need to include effective safeguards which will enable policy-makers to maintain existing or adopt new standards, policies and legislation and ensure equitable high quality healthcare for every patient.

5(c) Priorities for health systems strengthening in the WHO European Region 2015 – 2020: walking the talk on people centeredness

CPME participates to an EU tender on the promotion of self-care systems in the European Union that will issue EU policy recommendations on self-care, including 5 minor ailments: cough, lower urinary tract infection, Athlete's foot, cold and heartburn.

Furthermore, CPME is an active partner of a coalition on health literacy and believes that much needs to be done to improve the health literacy of patients. Higher health literacy would also support towards patient centred care enabling patients to take charge and understand their health condition.

Equally, CPME is an active partner of the European Union Joint Action on Patient Safety and Quality of Care as well as the EU Expert Group on Patient Safety and Quality of Care. Patient-centeredness is at the core of both areas of action.

Last but not least, already in September 2004 CPME issued a Statement on Information to Patients and Patient Empowerment, attesting to the long-standing commitment of European doctors in this area.

5(d) Physical activity strategy for the WHO European Region 2016–2025

CPME was pleased to participate in the stakeholder consultation towards a new WHO European Physical Activity for Health Strategy. Physical activity benefits the health status of all population groups, also as a tool for secondary and tertiary prevention. CPME would like to underline that vulnerable groups, such as migrants, older persons or persons affected by poverty must be equally enabled to carry out physical activity. To this end, cross-sectoral awareness is key, with sectors such as town planning or social protection and inclusion being vital. Lastly it is important to avoid conflicts of interest arising from the involvement of commercial actors in the implementation of physical activity programmes.

CPME fully recognises the role doctors have to play in promoting physical activity and will continue to keep the issue on its agenda, in particular by implementing the CPME commitments to the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, which include the creation of a 'Health Village Toolbox' to facilitate interventions promoting healthy lifestyles in settings outside of traditional healthcare delivery.

5(e) Roadmap of actions to strengthen implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in the European Region 2015–2025: making tobacco a thing of the past

CPME welcomes all initiatives which contribute to the ever-stricter control of tobacco products. CPME remains a dedicated partner in 'making tobacco a thing of the past' and continues to call on the signatories of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to implement its provision, also with regard to policy-makers' conduct in the policy-making process. CPME is especially encouraged by an increasing awareness of the dangers of smoking in the presence of children and calls for the adoption of effective measures to tackle this problem.