

The impact of the financial crisis on health and health systems

Lunch break, Tuesday,
14 September 2010

Regional Committee for Europe Sixtieth session

Moscow, 13–16 September 2010

EUR/RC60/TD.4

Impact of the financial crisis on health and health systems

Structure

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| 13:00 | Regional Office
facilitator | 1. Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting the context: an overview of the financial crisis, the challenges to Member States and the role of the Regional Office |
| 13:10 | Professor Martin
McKee | 2. A framework for understanding health impacts and policy implications <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A review of the recent evidence and its policy implications, identifying<ul style="list-style-type: none">– initial trends;– the challenges of demonstrating the health impacts of policies in the short term; and– the case for sound health systems and policies as a route to both health and wealth. |
| 13:25 | Regional Office
facilitator and panel
members | 3. Panel discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each panel member will make a five-minute presentation, on a topic of which the facilitator has notified them in advance, in which they will tackle a dimension of the crisis from their national perspective or with reference to the help that their institution has provided to Member States on the issue. Presenters will be asked to highlight relevant best practices or links with the work of the Regional Office. Issues include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– protecting and ensuring access for the most vulnerable– maximizing health gain– strengthening Health in all Policies– shaping policy interventions<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. rationing while protecting equityb. improving performance to ensure value for moneyc. changing investment patterns for sustainability– links to the European Review on the Social Determinants of Health and the Health Divide, the new European health policy and public health tools. |
| 14:10 | Regional Office
facilitator | 4. Open discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The facilitator will invite contributions from the floor. |
| 14:25 | Regional Office
facilitator | 5. Conclusions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The facilitator will close the session by highlighting key conclusions and ways forward for the Office. |

Background

Initial responses to the financial crisis have varied across the WHO European Region, depending on the severity of the recession in different Member States, the conditions in the country when the crisis began and the organization and performance of public services, including health, in that country. Nonetheless, the early indications are clear; there is evidence across the Region of measures that involve cutting government expenditure, thus creating risks to health, particularly for the most vulnerable populations, and adversely affecting health systems and those that work in them.

Objectives

The Regional Office for Europe is engaged in efforts to support Member States with these challenges, by raising awareness of problems that lie ahead, supporting health ministers as they lobby to secure services and identifying policy responses to counter the most negative impacts of the economic crisis. This session is intended to give the Regional Committee:

- an understanding of the impact of the financial crisis on health experience and inequities ;
- an opportunity to review the perspectives of Member States and international agencies and exchange best practices;
- an opportunity to debate different priorities, approaches and strategies to cope with a restricted health-care budget; and
- a platform to advise the Regional Office as it shapes its policy and other responses.

Format

The technical briefing will consist of a panel discussion facilitated by two members of the Regional Office, Professor Jose M. Martin-Moreno and Dr Joe Kutzin. It will comprise a maximum of seven panel members and will involve:

- an introduction outlining the relevance of the issue and the role of the Regional Office;
- a technical briefing on the health status of populations in Member States, its equity implications and the role of health systems and policies;
- a response by each panel member to a question agreed in advance on a particular dimension of the impact of the financial crisis on health and health systems;
- a plenary discussion allowing reactions and contributions from the meeting as a whole.

Composition of the panel

The panel will include:

- a representative from four Member States, reflecting the spread of countries in the Region (Greece, Latvia, the Republic of Moldova and Spain).
- institutes represented will include:
 - World Bank
 - European Commission
 - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Role of the facilitators

The facilitators will not only chair the session and the subsequent plenary discussion but will also work with the panel members in advance to ensure that their presentations are effective and that, taken together, the seven interventions address the crisis and its dimensions as comprehensively as possible.