



HEALTH FIRST  
EUROPE

# Overcoming Barriers to Innovation in Health:

*“Examining the Drivers of Innovation”*



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# EU Innovation Policy



The European Commission has made innovation (technological, social and organisational) a priority under the Europe 2020 Strategy with a significant focus on health due to the possibility for innovative solutions to revolutionise the healthcare sector. Framework initiatives such as the Innovation Union and the Digital Agenda are helping to address the barriers to the uptake of innovation to ensure that the EU increasingly focuses on maintaining a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy<sup>1</sup>.



## Addressing barriers to Innovation

Member States have found ways of successfully implementing innovative solutions in health ensuring that the best service to treat a condition is consistently made available to patients. Health First Europe believes that such successes are extremely important for patients who benefit significantly from access to innovative solutions for improving their quality of life. However, identifying and sharing the best practices of Member States remains difficult. Levels of innovation can vary greatly across Member States, but practices which enable health innovations to become accessible to patients could very well be shared across the EU so that greater efficiency and better patient outcomes are more common.

The European Commission is currently undertaking the Pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing which looks to bring representatives from both the supply and demand sides together to overcome existing barriers to successful implementation of health innovations. However, one of the key challenges to this partnership has been the broad involvement of Member States. Incentives are needed for Member State participation in the discovery and communication of best practices regarding already existing innovative solutions for patients in health systems.

### Case Studies: Mapping Research

World Health Organization - "Global Atlas on Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Control" (2011) maps the world distribution of specific CVD mortality rates in addition to preventable risks such as smoking and obesity<sup>2</sup>

NHS - "Atlas of Variation in Healthcare" (UK) (2010) includes 34 maps on variations in healthcare spending and outcomes among England's 152 Primary Care Trusts (PCT)<sup>3</sup>





# The Solution: Mapping drivers of innovation

Health First Europe believes that in order to address the challenge of implementing innovative solutions in health, the European Commission should consider developing research which maps the drivers of innovation. The research would necessitate taking account of the disparities between Member States, identifying the barriers to access, validating best practices and communicating these best practices throughout the EU.

For the European Commission to map innovation, four fundamental activities are required:

- 1) Identifying why disparities exist between Member States and regions. Why is one treatment available in one area and not another? A robust set of data is needed to not only identify the discrepancies, but also to point out the variations in the ranges of care available.
- 2) Correlating the data on discrepancies in care to the known barriers in innovation (silo budgeting, rationing of care, reimbursement schemes, etc.).
- 3) Connecting the barriers and the solutions to set up a validation of best practice.
- 4) Diffusing best practice across the identified areas where lack of access is high.

## ***The drivers of access to innovation will:***

- Spur Innovation
- Improve life expectancy/quality through diffused adoption
- Improve efficiency and value of health system

## ***HFE calls on the Commission to undertake this research by:***

- Concentrating on a few key areas of concern, such as patient safety (healthcare associated infections) and the management of chronic diseases
- Developing a comprehensive exchange AND adoption of best practices with Member States (such as through a Joint Action)

Developing this data will support the Commission's very own goals of the Innovation Union and the Innovation Partnership. This research will also result in a continuous exchange of reliable information for rapid deployment of best practice across borders adding value to Member State health systems.





**Health First Europe calls for the European Parliament and the Council to encourage the Commission to map best practices of innovative solutions in health through the following initiatives:**

- European Pilot Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (addressing barriers to innovation) <sup>4</sup>
- Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding <sup>5</sup>
- Health for Growth and Consumer Programmes 2014-2020 under Objective 1 (contribute to innovative and sustainable health systems)

**What can you do as a policymaker to support innovation in health?**

- Provide Parliamentary support for examining the drivers of health innovation
- Create a budget line for funding to undertaking research on the drivers of innovation within Horizon 2020/Health Programme

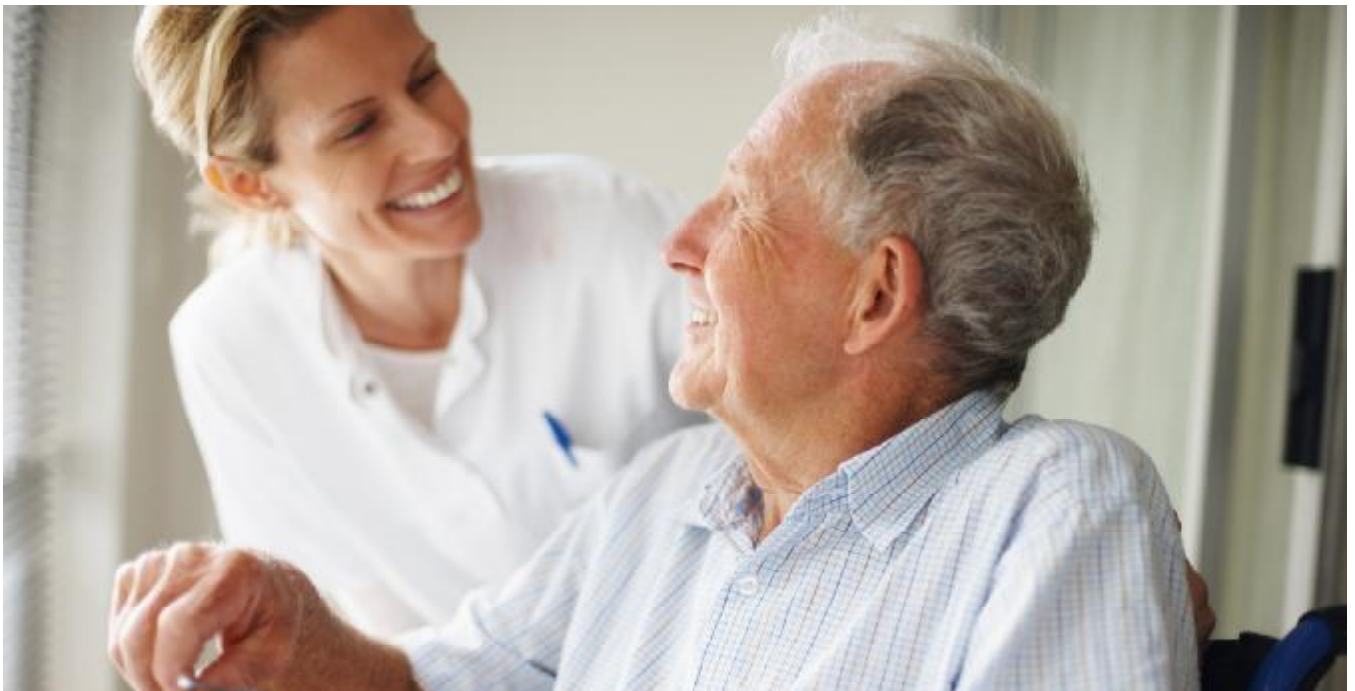
<sup>1</sup> Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovation Union. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM 546: Brussels, 6.10.2010.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization. Global Atlas on cardiovascular disease prevention and control. Published October 2011. [http://www.who.int/cardiovascular\\_diseases/publications/atlas\\_cvd/en/](http://www.who.int/cardiovascular_diseases/publications/atlas_cvd/en/)

<sup>3</sup> Right Care. NHS Atlas of Variation in Healthcare: Reducing unwarranted variation to increase value and improve quality. Published November 2010. [http://www.rightcare.nhs.uk/atlas/qipp\\_nhsAtlas-LOW\\_261110c.pdf](http://www.rightcare.nhs.uk/atlas/qipp_nhsAtlas-LOW_261110c.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> European Commission. Press release: European Innovation Partnership agrees on actions to turn ageing into an opportunity. Published 7 November 2011.

<sup>5</sup> European Parliament Resolution INI/2011/2107. Green paper: From Challenges to Opportunities – Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding (Articles 18, 21, 24). 27 September 2011.



**Health First Europe** was established in 2004 as a non-profit, non-commercial alliance of patient, healthcare workers, academics and healthcare experts and the medical technology industry. We aim to ensure patient access to modern, innovative and reliable medical technology.

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