

# AN OPEN CONSULTATION ON PATIENT SAFETY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

## Meta Informations

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## intro

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of the Organisation (if applicable)

International Federation of Anthroposophic Medical Associations (IVAA)

Stakeholder Group

NGO

Country

International, registered in Switzerland

Address

EU-Liason Office Rue du Trône 194, B - 1050 Bruxelles, Phone: +32 2 64 00

## Contact Person

Name:

Dr Peter Zimmermann

Role in organisation

senior management

## Size of Your organisation

Number of employees	1 - 9
Annual turnover (in millions EUR)	0 - 10
Your organisation's geographical area of activities	International

**Are European citizens receiving the safest possible care?**

**1. Personal Experiences**

**QUESTION 1**

Personally	No
Family Member	No

**QUESTION 2**  
If you answered 'yes' to either option at Question 1, how would you describe that experience?

**QUESTION 3**  
If you answered 'yes' to either option at Question 1, was that harm :

**QUESTION 4**

Personally	No
Family Member	No

**QUESTION 5**  
If you answered 'yes' to either option at Question 4, how would you describe that experience?

**QUESTION 6**  
If you answered yes to either options in Question 4, was that harm :

**QUESTION 7**

In general, how do you view the measures being taken to reduce harm to patients in healthcare settings in your country?	Neither adequate nor inadequate
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**2. National Political Support for Patient Safety**

**QUESTIONS 8-10**

8. How important would a national commitment to improving patient safety in your country be?	Very Important
9. How important would a national patient safety strategy in your country, (perhaps as part of a general healthcare quality strategy) be?	Very Important
10. How important is it to have an EU strategy for patient safety ?	Very Important

## QUESTION 11

Medication-related event	1
Medical device or equipment-related event	2
Healthcare-associated infection	
Error in diagnosis	7
Surgery-related event	6
Communication problems	3
Other (Please specify)	4

Other, Please specify

Training and Information in CAM therapies for health professionals and civil servants in Natinal Agencies

## QUESTION 12

Political leadership and financial support?	9
A reporting and learning system	2
Patient involvement in policy development	7
Health professional involvement in policy development	6
Patient safety education for health professionals	1
Standards and/or external assessment for patient safety	5
Patient safety indicators	4
A dedicated patient safety research agenda and budget	3

A compensation system for those harmed by healthcare (or their families)	8
Other (please specify)	10
Other, please specify	

### 3. Budgetary Commitment to Safety

#### QUESTIONS 13-15

13. How important is it to have a dedicated national resource commitment for patient safety initiatives in your country?	Important
14. How important is it to have resources identified at the healthcare organisation level for patient safety initiatives in your country?	Important
15. How important is it to have dedicated resources at the EU level to support Member States in addressing patient safety concerns?	Important

### 4. Patient and Public Involvement in Patient Safety Improvements

#### QUESTIONS 16-20

16. How important is it that patients should be seen as experts on patient safety in your country?	Very Important
17. How important is it that patients should not just informed but also empowered to take part in patient safety and quality programmes in your country?	Very Important
18. How important is it to have systems in place at national and local level to involve patient groups?	Very Important
19. How important is it that patients and the public should be informed about potential and actual patient safety incidents and adverse events in your country?	Very Important
20. How important is it that patients (and/or their families) should be suitably supported in the aftermath of a patient safety incident?	Very Important

## QUESTION 21

What further action, if any, would you like to see in your country to improve the involvement of the patient or public in patient safety policies and programmes?

In this context IVAA points to a number of initiatives in Germany, United Kingdom or Switzerland, just to name a few, which are concerned about the high percentage of safety incidents or adverse events in our complex healthcare settings . Amongst others these initiatives have developed a comprehensive array of technical and medical management actions to fight adverse events and to increase patient safety. These measures include: - Patient safety as a compulsory subject in health professional training - Establishment of training centers for patient safety for in-job training of health professionals - Introduction of special patient-medication info-systems (Barcode systems for the medication of patients) - Development of better guidance-systems in case of surgical interventions - Establishment of internal error reporting- and correction systems in healthcare settings

## 5. Local Healthcare Management and Leadership

### QUESTIONS 22-24

22. How important is it that patient safety is treated seriously by the management of healthcare organisations in your country?

Not particularly important

23. How important is it for healthcare providers to have effective and comprehensive communications systems on patient safety issues and concerns in place?

Not particularly important

24. How important is it for every healthcare provider to have a senior person responsible for the safety of patients?

Not particularly important

## 6. Health Professionals

### QUESTIONS 25-29

25. How important would further educating health professionals in your country in the area of patient safety be in reducing adverse events?

Very Important

26. How important would including patient safety in the continuing professional development of health professionals in your country be in reducing adverse events?

Very Important

27. How important are systems regulating health professionals, including disciplinary procedures, in efforts to minimise unsafe care in your country?

Not important

28. How important are professional standards and codes of practice for health professionals in efforts to minimise unsafe care in your country?	Very Important
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29. How important is it for health professionals to be suitably supported in the aftermath of a patient safety incident?	Important
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### QUESTION 30

What further action, if any, do you think needs to be taken to improve the knowledge and awareness of patient safety issues and increase the application of safer practice actions among health professionals in your country?

Resistance against antibiotics is by now a European wide problem and developed into great-risks factor for the safety of seriously ill patients. As one of the causal factors for the development of this newly risks can be regarded the unlimited and criticless use of antibiotics for banal diseases. On the one side this is due to the lack of information and skills of health professionals concerning complementary/alternative ways of treatment and on the other side to the tendency of overprotection by European and/or national regulations hampering the availability of complementary, i.e. homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products on the market.

## 7. Reporting and Learning Systems

### QUESTIONS 31-34

31. How important is it for there to be a national reporting and learning system that collects, analyses and monitors information on adverse events and patient safety incidents in your country?	Very Important
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32. How important is it for incident and adverse event data and the results of analyses to be evaluated and shared nationally in your country, without being used to discipline individuals?	Very Important
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33. How important is it for there to be a national (or regional) organisation (institute, agency etc) that actively seeks out and tries to spread best practice and learning in your country?	Very Important
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34. How important is it for the data from national (or regional) reporting and learning systems to be pooled at the EU level as a common resource for learning?	Very Important
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## 8. Other Patient Safety Information and the Sharing of Information

## QUESTIONS 35-38

35. How important is it for there to be a common patient safety classification or terminology system in your country?

Not particularly important

36. How important is it for common classification or terminology system to be developed and used throughout the European Union?

Not particularly important

37. How important is it for a common set of patient safety indicators to exist in your country?

Not particularly important

38. How important is it for a common set of patient safety indicators to be developed and used throughout the European Union?

Not particularly important

## 9. Standards and/or External Assessment

### QUESTIONS 39-42

39. How important is it for there to be a system of minimum patient safety standards for healthcare organisations in place in your country?

Not important

40. How important is it for there to be a common set of minimum standards for patient safety for all healthcare organisations within the EU?

Not important

41. How important is it for there to be a system of external assessment of healthcare organisations in respect of patient safety in your country?

Not important

42. How important is it for there to be a common system of external assessment for all healthcare organisations in the EU in respect of patient safety?

Not important

### QUESTION 43

If your response to Question 39 is in favour of a system of minimum patient safety standards, which organisation(s) do you think should be responsible for setting and monitoring performance against these standards in your country?

#### QUESTION 44

If your response to Question 40 is in favour of a system of external assessment for patient safety, which organisation(s) do you think should be responsible for carrying out such an assessment in your country?

### 10. Research and Development around Patient Safety

#### QUESTIONS 45-48

45. How important is it for resources to be allocated to patient safety research in your country?

Very Important

46. How important is increased co-operation between EU Member States, supported by the European Community, on the priority-setting, and the commissioning, of patient safety research?

Very Important

47. How important would a database at the EU level be, which would bring together results of patient safety research and other learning and experiences, to be used as a common European resource?

Very Important

48. How important are I.T tools aimed at providing health professionals with relevant, timely and up-to-date information, such as comprehensive electronic health records, decision support systems, e-prescription support and IT-based surgery training, to efforts to reduce harm?

Very Important

#### QUESTION 49

In which areas of patient safety do you think more research needs to take place, if any? Possible areas include research on the extent of harm, the type of harm, on patient safety interventions, on the economic costs of harm, on harm outside the hospital setting and any others you feel are currently under-researched.

For example: comparative studies concerning adverse drug effects between mainstream/CAM therapies in: -acute infectious diseases of childhood, -allergic diseases -asthma -chronic diseases

#### QUESTION 50

If you answered positively to Question 47, what type of information should be held centrally? numbers, type and severity of adverse drug effects

## QUESTION 51

Again, if you answered positively to question 47, who or which organisation should be responsible for maintaining the central mechanism?

European research institution

## 11. Complaints and Redress

### QUESTIONS 52-57

52. How important is for there to be an arbitration system for settling complaints without going to court in your country?	Very Important
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53. How important is it for patients to have access to available information on the redress available to them if they (or their families) are harmed by healthcare in your country or in other EU countries?	Important
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54. How important is it for the system of redress in your country to be based on the ability of the patient to prove an error was made by one or more healthcare professionals?	Not important
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55. How important is it for there to be a national-wide system for calculating compensation payments in your country?	Not important
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56. How important is it for compensation systems in your country to cover not only physical harm but other factors such as loss of income?	Not particularly important
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57. How important would it be to have an EU-wide system of redress?	Not important
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## 12. General Issues

### QUESTIONS 58-59

58. Adequate steps are being taken in your country to tackle the problem of patient safety.	Agree
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59. The European Community can play a role in supporting Member States in their efforts to address patient safety concerns.	Agree
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#### QUESTION 60

What (further) action needs to take place in your country at the national, regional and/or local levels to improve patient safety?

#### QUESTION 61

In which areas of patient safety should the European Community play a role in supporting Member States in their efforts to address patient safety concerns and how should this support work in practice?

There is a need to provide patients with the possibility of a genuine "freedom of choice" in treatment. This is primarily a question of interaction between health professionals and patients and of comprehensive information to patients about all therapeutic options available, including integrated and complementary alternatives. In this respect patients have to be mobilized to contribute to cure themselves. It has been shown that changes of life-style can contribute to self-healing and reduce the need for medication, which always include a potential of adverse effect. Complementary and integrative methods (CAM) have to be included into the information given to the patients about the range of treatments available. CAM treatments often can offer good alternatives especially for less severe and for chronic deceases, as they usually have less adverse effects and by this, contribute directly to patient safety. Instead of focusing exlusevily on supranational controlling systems, EU Commission should also similarly foster health systems in the member-states to open up real possibilities for the patients to have the freedom of choice with regard to alterantive ways of treatment and the use of complementary/alternative medicinal products. In this respect, the implementation of training facilities and the provision of adequate and competent information concerning methods of complementary/alternative medicine (CAM) for both, health professionals and civil servants in National Agencies would contribute most significantly to improve patient safety in Europe.