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IVAA Position on the DG SANCO Work-Plan 2009

IVAA appreciates the initiative of DG SANCO to consult stakeholders on their Work-Plan 2009. The year 2009 is characterized by the end of term of the present Barroso-Commission and the inauguration of a new EU Commission at the end of the year. Such a transitional year implies a phasing out ongoing activities and a transformation of the current EU Commission services into the activities of the new EU Commission. A work-plan of such a year demands special attention of all parties concerned.

Probably due to these special circumstances, the preliminary orientations of DG SANCOs Work-Plan 2009 rather conservatively continue with the three main features of the EU health policy of previous years: "Health security", "Promote health" and "Health information". The different subjects cited in each of these sectors again reflect a continuation of the present approach to public health by the EU Services.

IVAA follows DG SANCO in its goal of a robust continuation of the EU health policy in the framework of the ongoing activities of present EU health policy in the year 2009. In supporting these priorities, outlined by DG SANCO, IVAA would like to point to the three following issues to be considered in drafting and implementing the final work-plan:

- The general objective of "health in all policies" has to be continued in the EU policies as one of the indispensable balances of the strong market-orientation of all EU policies. A sensitive, patient orientated EU health policy as part of the social commitment of the EU will contribute to overcome the growing divide between EU citizens' demands and EU policies.
- In promoting health, convince the member states to open up policies in the special sectors of "children and young", "healthy environment" and "wider determinants" for the input of the Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) treatments. The integrative approach to health within CAM offers here best practices, is patient oriented and promotes healthy lifestyles with concentration of the prevention of illness.

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- Define new priorities in co-operation with the competent authorities of the member states in the field of “Health information” to include aspects of CAM in the sector of “reporting and analysis”. The growing use of CAM treatments in Europe demands adequate and sufficient “dissemination and application of health information” for the European citizens.

On behalf of the IVAA Council



Dr Peter Zimmermann
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