



Dear Reader,

We thank you for your interest in our work this year and hope that you found our information helpful.

All the best for your work in 2010!

Sincerely yours,

Annette Hexelschneider

Head of Knowledge and Information Management Support Unit

As announced in the last Newsletter please find below an interview with our new Director Health & Care, Catharina Hjortsberg:

Catharina, As you come from Sweden could you please explain what are the Swedish health and care challenges today?

Sweden has proportionally Europe's largest elder population. Five percent of the population is 80 years or older and nearly one fifth have passed the retirement age of 65 and are pensioners. Chronic diseases that require monitoring and treatment – and usually a lifetime of medication – place high demands on the system. Consequently, there is a growing demand for health services, including prevention, medical intervention, and nursing care.

The main challenges are cost containment (a major concern is the increasing costs that is expected for all types of pharmaceuticals) and integration of care. The current trends include specialization of the competencies of hospitals (a concentration of emergency hospitals and highly specialized care), a shift from hospital care to primary and home-based care, a strengthening of primary care, and continued efforts to improve the coordination of care – especially for the elderly and the chronically ill. National guiding principles and other “knowledge governing” are gaining in importance for priority setting in the Swedish health care sector. To improve the efficiency in this process, national health technology assessment (HTA) organizations support the health sector.

Central on the political agenda currently is how the patient's right and influence on health care provision can be strengthened. Free choice of health care provider has recently been introduced – this also includes the elderly when choosing provider for home services. A set of national performance indicators for productivity and quality of health care providers are made official on a regular basis to guide and inform the patient about quality differences, and as a way of providing incentives for providers to improve health care services in terms of clinical quality and medical outcomes, as well as patient experience and efficient resource use.



What are your research interests?

I have many research interests in health economics: determinants of utilisation of health care, health financing, ways of reimbursing health care providers, patient choice and participation in the health services. I have performed several economic evaluations of drug treatment and other medical technology and studies of the pharmaceutical market. During the last few years I have taken an interest in quality of life measurements and QALYs.

What are your plans for your work at the European Centre?

To continue my predecessor Manfred Hubert's good work in strengthening the European Centre in health economics. This encompasses several areas:

- Alcohol, Drugs, Addiction
- Health and Disability Policy
- Health Economics & Indicators
- Health Promotion and Prevention
- Long-term Care & Personal Social Services

The European Centre is a well-established research institute providing expertise in the fields of welfare and social policy development. I would like to further strengthen its position in Europe in being specialized in health economic analysis, contributing to sound decision-making in health-care and to bridge the gap between health economic research and various actors in the health care sector.

For further information please contact: [Catharina Hjortsberg](#)

Projects

EUROMODupdate

A major EUROMOD development project is being supported by the European Commission DG-EMPL with the key objective to improve and extend EUROMOD's usefulness as a tool for policy-relevant research and policy monitoring.

In the project framework two new documents have been published:

- Feasibility Study, Latvia (tax-benefit systems 2006-2009),
- Feasibility Study, Slovakia (tax-benefit systems 2006-2009).

Read more about: [project website with feasibility studies](#)

For further information please contact: [Orsolya Lelkes](#)



Events

Past Events

4 December, Vienna (Austria): Ageing, the Crisis and their Consequences for Fiscal Sustainability in Austria

Presentations from the workshop organized by the European Centre in collaboration with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance are now on-line.

Read more about: [presentations](#)

For further information please contact: [Asghar Zaidi](#)

3 December, Bratislava (Slovakia): Workshop on Care Dependence Policy in European Perspective – Selected Issues

Frédérique Hoffmann presented the /Facts and Figures on long-term care: Europe and North America/ by Huber, Rodrigues, Hoffmann, Gasior and Marin (2009) as part of the workshop organised by Dr Kvetoslava Repkova on care dependency policies in Europe. Her presentation was commented on by Dr Darina Sedláková who is the Head of the WHO in Slovakia.

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#)

Upcoming Events

25 January 2010, London (UK): “Old Age in a Global Environment: Lessons from the UN Programme on Ageing”

The Institute of Gerontology of the King's College London, Age Concern and Help the Aged organise the 2010 David Hobman Annual Lecture given by Alexandre Sidorenko, previously UN Focal Point on Ageing and now working at the European Centre, in the Great Hall, King's College London.

Read more about: [David Hobman Annual Lecture website](#)

For further information please contact: [Alexandre Sidorenko](#)



22-23 February 2010, Budapest (Hungary): Workshop “Long-Term Care in Europe – Discussing Trends and Relevant Issues”

The European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, in cooperation with SZMI (Szociálpolitikai és Munkaügyi Intézet, Institute for Social Policy and Labour) in Budapest, is organizing a workshop on “Long-Term Care in Europe – Discussing Trends and Relevant Issues”.

As its main theme, the workshop will address long-term care for dependent older people. It will seek to discuss several trends and issues that are relevant both for Western and Central and Eastern European countries. Among the key issues to be discussed in the several sessions that compose the workshop are the coordination of health and social care services and challenges faced to increase the quality of long-term care services. Sessions will also be devoted to discuss:

- different approaches to enhance consumer choices and their consequences;
- interdependent links between Western and Eastern Europe in what concerns both the workforce in long-term care and informal care, namely through the migration of care workers and informal carers.

The opening session will include the presentation and discussion of the newest publication of the European Centre, i.e. *Facts and Figures on Long-Term Care: Europe and North America* by Huber, Rodrigues, Hoffmann, Gasior and Marin (2009), which provides indicators that will help frame the ensuing sessions.

Read more about: [event](#)

For further information please contact: [Frédérique Hoffmann](#), [Ricardo Rodrigues](#)

Publications

Website / New Newsletter

We are happy to announce the re-launch of the MonitoringRIS website and the publication of the first *Mainstreaming Ageing-Newsletter* in order to

- deliver knowledge and information about the follow-up to the RIS,
- promote exchange of experiences in the field of ageing-related policies,
- provide an overview of instruments, activities, and resources, such as country facts and figures.

Read more about: [website](#), [newsletter](#)

For further information please contact: [Annette Hexelschneider](#)



Newspaper Articles

[Marin, Bernd \(2005-2009\) Various articles in Der Standard, in Die Presse, in Format, in Kleine Zeitung, in Salzburger Nachrichten, Vienna, Graz, Salzburg, 2009](#)

For further information please contact: [Bernd Marin](#)

Contact for general newsletter/web site comments, suggestions or questions:

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