



# CPME MONTHLY BULLETIN

*Stay in the Loop!*



## December 2021

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to share with you the latest edition of the CPME Monthly Bulletin with the outcomes of the Executive Committee the meeting on 16 December 2021.

The members of the Executive Committee discussed a range of topics including the dates of the General Assembly and Board meeting in 2023 and approved a new Working Group on Climate Change and a response to public consultation 'Adapting liability rules to the digital age and artificial intelligence'.

We hope the bulletin is informative and we invite you to consult our latest news and the members' section of our [website](#).

This was the final meeting of the Executive Committee 2019-2021 and I would like to thank our outgoing President Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery for his outstanding leadership over the past three years. In addition we thank our departing colleagues Vice President Dr Daiva Brogienė and departing Immediate Past President Dr Jacques de Haller for their invaluable commitment and hard work.

We look forward to building on their achievements in the [Executive Committee 2022-2024](#) and warmly welcome our newly elected Vice Presidents Dr Marily Passakiotou and Dr Jacqueline Rossant-Lumbroso.

Kind regards,

Dr Christiaan Keijzer  
CPME President

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## Executive Committee meeting – December 16 2021

### Internal Affairs

#### **Meeting dates for 2023 recommended**

*The EC decided to maintain the usual spring/autumn cycle and recommended to hold the General Assembly and Board meetings on the following dates:*

- 24-25 March 2023 in Croatia to celebrate CMC's 100th anniversary.
- 10-11 November 2023 in a venue still to be confirmed.

### Policies

#### **Response to public consultation 'Adapting liability rules to the digital age and artificial intelligence' approved**

*The EC approved the draft response as amended by the eHealth WG on 10 December.*

The European Commission launched a public consultation to collect opinions on whether it is necessary to adapt liability rules for the digital age, AI and the circular economy. The consultation seeks to understand how to revise the Product Liability Directive taking into account the issues identified in the 2018 evaluation, looking at ways to address harms specifically caused by AI systems.

The current Directive introduces a system of strict liability of the producer for damage caused by a defect in its respective product. In case of a physical injury or material damage, the injured party is entitled to compensation if he/she proves the damage, the defect in the product (i.e. that it did not provide the safety that the public is entitled to expect) and the causal link between the defective product and the damage.

CPME's stance in the draft response is to support strict liability for AI systems (as there is no need for the victim to prove fault) and mandatory insurance for high-risk AI systems.

#### **New CPME Working Group on Climate Change approved**

*The Executive Committee approved the draft terms of reference as amended of the new CPME Working Group on Climate Change. The EC decided to limit the timeframe of the working group until the end of 2022.*

Dr Martin Balzan, CPME Rapporteur on Environmental Health & Climate Change, had proposed to establish a new working group to develop a new CPME policy on climate change. The overall aim of the WG is to support our work on climate change, as it affects the social and environmental determinants of health, such as clean air.

### **Pan-European Mental Health Coalition of the WHO European Region**

*The Executive Committee decided to not apply for membership to the new Pan-European Mental Health Coalition of the WHO European Region.*

The [Pan-European Mental Health Coalition](#) is a partnership dedicated to improving the mental health across the WHO European Region. It will target gaps in mental health services by gathering stakeholders such as national leaders, professionals, members of civil society, and experts to collaborate on transforming mental health services, promoting mental health and preventing mental ill health across the life course. Due to its projected heavy workload and financial costs to which CPME would need to invest, the Executive Committee decided to not apply for membership. Moreover, mental health is currently not a CPME priority.

### **Letter to MEP Voss on AI report**

*The Executive Committee took note of a letter sent to MEP Axel Voss advocating for amendments to the draft report on artificial intelligence in a digital age.*

The letter noted the urgent need to progress in this area and supports innovative AI solutions in health, and suggests amendments to ensure that this is not to the detriment of patient safety and quality of care.

### **Feedback on 2030 Policy Programme “Path to the Digital Decade”**

*The EC took note of the adopted [CPME Feedback on the Commission’s Proposal for a Decision establishing the 2030 Policy Programme “Path to the Digital Decade”](#).*

Our feedback focuses on the digital targets of the Proposal, in particular on the digital skills of the population and on the digitalisation of public services. Some key points are:

- A definition of ‘digital skills’ is needed in order to measure the performance in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI).
- We call for an appropriate balance between the (increasingly intensive) use of digital technologies, and the practice of health enhancing behaviours.
- We strongly recommend that ICT professionals abide to ethically-based codes of conduct and be subject to regulatory oversight and disciplinary sanctions.
- The targets on healthcare services must always consider patient safety, quality of care, clinical independence, patient empowerment and a potential digital divide.
- The digitalisation must not be imposed as the only available mean to access healthcare services.
- The closure of healthcare facilities in less-populated or under-served areas must not be justified and assurances must be given that health inequalities and the digital divide are not increased.
- Moreover, it cannot exclude patients’ expectations or preference for the traditional face-to-face patient-doctor relationship. Patient empowerment needs to be considered.
- Secure and stable platforms are needed to ensure patient privacy and confidentiality, and to obtain consent from legally incapable persons, including minors. Data concerning health needs to be encrypted.

## Monitoring

### Cancer

#### Political deal on protecting workers from hazardous substances

On 16 December, the European Parliament and the Council secured the inclusion of reprotoxic substances in the fourth revision of the Carcinogens and Mutagens at Work Directive. As a consequence, the directive will be renamed the Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxic Substances Directive (CMRD). Workers who deal with hazardous medicinal products will also receive sufficient and appropriate training, with a view to better protect workers in the healthcare sector. Please find more [here](#). The agreement is welcomed by the [Stop Cancer at Work campaign](#) where CPME has been participating since 2020.

### European Parliament

#### European Citizen's Panel on Climate Change, Environment and Health delivers recommendations

In the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, Around 200 European Citizens of different ages and backgrounds and from all Member States met in the [European Citizen's Panel on Climate Change, Environment and Health](#). As a result of their meeting, they have adopted 51 recommendations on the challenges facing Europe. The full list of recommendations is available [here](#). Some of the recommendations include restricting the use of antibiotics in farming only to situations where they are absolutely necessary to protect the health and well-being of animals, harmonized training standards and certifications for healthcare professionals across the European Union, as well as a revision of the EU treaties to ensure that Health and Healthcare become a shared competency between the EU and Member States. The recommendations of the European Citizens' Panels will be presented and discussed at the Conference Plenary, where the Conference's final proposals will continue to be shaped.

#### EPP calls for specialised parliamentary health committee

The European Parliament's centre-right European Peoples' Party (EPP) is calling for a specialised health committee. Currently, there is only a joint committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). Calls for a separate parliamentary committee for health policy have also been raised in the past, including at the CPME MEP Doctors' Roundtable in 2021. During the current legislature, the EPP has already been successful in setting up a temporary committee on action beating cancer, which recently concluded its activities.

## Drugs and Alcohol

### European Commission proposes stronger mandate for the EMCDDA

The Commission is proposing to [strengthen the mandate](#) of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), transforming it into the European Union Drugs Agency. The proposed changes will ensure that the agency can play a more important role in identifying and addressing current and future challenges related to illicit drugs in the EU. Under the proposed new mandate, the EMCDDA will among other things, develop threat assessments on illicit drugs, issue alerts when particularly dangerous substances become available on the market, and develop EU-level prevention and awareness raising campaigns relating to illicit drugs.

## Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

### Expert Panel of effective ways of investing in health tasked with investigating management of AMR across health systems

According to the [minutes of the meeting on the 24th of November](#), the Expert Panel of effective ways of investing in health will be mandated to deliver an opinion to support the Commission's work on AMR as well as to support a potential Council Recommendation on AMR. The Expert Panel would be mandated to provide an opinion focusing on how to improve AMR management in national health systems, taking a more systematic approach. The panel would be asked to come up with recommendations on translating existing AMR guidelines and surveillance data into effective implementation across health systems, and define ways to invest in health systems in order to improve antimicrobial stewardship. The opinion on AMR should be ready by summer 2022

## Brexit

### EU proposes compromise for post-Brexit supply of medicines to Northern Ireland, Ireland, Malta and Cyprus

The European Commission has [published draft legislation](#) aiming to simplify the continued export of medicines to Northern Ireland from the rest of the United Kingdom. These proposals respond to the ongoing negotiations between the EU and the UK on the application of rules agreed in the post-Brexit Northern Ireland protocol which had caused manufacturers to withdraw medicines from the Northern Irish health system. Main obstacles reported included requirements to relocate facilities for testing or regulatory functions to the EU. The draft legislation foresees for a permanent suspension of several requirements to facilitate the equal access to medicines for patients in Northern Ireland. However, the legislation still has to pass through the legislative process within the EU and be accepted by the UK government.

## GMC data shows number of EU-trained doctors in UK stable after Brexit

The UK's General Medical Council (GMC) has published its [annual data](#) relating to EU-trained doctors. Its key findings include:

- “The number of licensed EEA graduates has grown steadily over the last five years
- Excluding the last year, there have been more EEA graduates joining – and fewer leaving – UK medical practice for each year since 2016 when the EU exit referendum took place
- The total number of EEA graduates increased during the pandemic despite a reduction in the number joining. This suggests fewer EEA graduates were leaving during this period too, though that can only be confirmed in the future.
- The growth of EEA doctors joining from Southern, Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries continues.”

## e-Health

### e-Consultation on EU Health Data Space – collecting your personal views!

Under the Joint Action Towards a European Health Data Space (TEHDAS), the Work Package 8 iCitizen (WP8) was set up to propose recommendations on the role of citizens in the future European Health Data Space. The Health Data Hub (France), the NHS Confederation (United Kingdom) and Sciensano (Belgium) were tasked to write about the involvement of patients, citizens, and their representatives in health data secondary use and sharing. The term “secondary use” refers to the use of health data for other purposes than individual care (for example, improvement of health care services through research and planning). During the first months of the project, it was discovered that the concept of “secondary use” was not always clear for citizens. The WP8 team then committed to two principles when drafting its recommendations on citizens' involvement:

- listen to citizens and patients' views on secondary use and on the role that they would like to play in the management and use of their health data;
- increase awareness, engagement, and empowerment, so that everyone can develop informed opinions and take an active role in the use of their health data.

The [Healthy Data e-consultation](#) is based on these two principles. CPME is requested by WP8 team to invite its members to reply and to share the link further among their networks.

The consultation is open until 4 April 2022. Please do not hesitate to reply here: <https://ourhealthydata.eu/>

## Council of the EU

### Council presents new 18-month “Trio-Council Presidency Programme”

On 1 January 2022, France will take over the Presidency of the Council. At the end of December, not only the Slovenian Presidency but also the German and Portuguese Presidencies of the Council will come to an end. The new Council Presidency consisting of France, the Czech Republic and Sweden has set [ambitious goals](#) for the next 18 months. Of particular interest are next to digital (artificial intelligence act, e-evidence regulation) also a chapter on “Building a Europe that protects health”: “The trio will step up efforts at European level to promote a “one health approach”, with the objective to ensure health protection for EU citizens and the EU’s capacity to respond to health challenges: from research to production and through improved coordination at EU level in response to border health threats. The trio will conclude negotiations and support the implementation of the European Health Union package, including the HERA proposal. The three Presidencies will continue work to ensure the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, access to medicines by securing a more robust supply chain for medicinal products and support work on upgrading legislation in the field of medicinal products based on the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe. The three Presidencies will promote the strengthening of health policies, including by focusing on measures for disease prevention and the promotion of healthy environments and lifestyles. In particular, the trio will focus on the implementation of Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan. The three Presidencies will work on the Commission’s proposal on the establishment of a European Health Data Space. The three Presidencies will also support the ‘one health approach’ by encouraging further measures to tackle antimicrobial resistance and strengthening the EU’s Action Plan against antimicrobial resistance. The three Presidencies will contribute to multilateral action in the field of health and support efforts on global health, mainly with the WHO to strengthen its capacity to deal with global health challenges, and other relevant UN agencies. The EU Commission had also already envisaged many of these projects in its [2022 work programme](#).

## European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

### Vaccination webinar for Bulgarian doctors

On 19 January, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Medicines Agency (EMA), and the Bulgarian National Centre for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases organised a webinar for Bulgarian doctors on vaccination. This was the first of a series of national level webinars focusing on the latest epidemiological situation, elements around COVID-19 vaccines safety, and evidence related to therapeutics and long COVID-19. **Similar webinars are planned for other countries and will soon follow.**



## CPME News

### CPME social media

Follow us on:

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### CNOM and CPME joint event on Protection of health data in Europe

The French Medical Council ([CNOM](#)) and the Standing Committee of European Doctors ([CPME](#)) are jointly organising an event on **Protection of health data in Europe** and warmly welcome you to join us in Paris on Wednesday **6 April 2022** from 3:30pm to 5:30pm. The event will be held at the CNOM headquarters at [4 rue Léon Jost, 75017 Paris](#) in a hybrid format allowing virtual attendance, with both English and French interpretation. Medical leaders from national medical associations from all over Europe will be attending the event, together with outstanding keynote speakers from the health data protection field. **More information to follow shortly.**

### Recent publications on the CPME Website

Members' section:

[DRAFT: Vaccination requirements in the EU+EFTA+UK](#)

[Report of the EFSA Stakeholder Forum – 9-10 Nov 2021](#)

[CPME Monthly Bulletin – November 2021](#)

[CPME Feedback 2030 Path to the Digital Decade, 13 December 2021](#)

[Report on the Annual Patients and Consumers Working Party \(PCWP\) and Healthcare Professionals](#)

[Working Party \(HCPWP\) meeting with all eligible organisations](#)

[CPME survey on triage protocols in the context of COVID-19 – Responses](#)

CPME news section:

[Christiaan Keijzer elected new President of CPME](#)