7.Q. Workshop: Designing an ERIC on health information to maximise research and evidence-based policy-making

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The European Union (EU), Member States and the European Commission need an integrated and sustainable health information system to support health research and evidence-based policy-making. The best scientific evidence derived from sound data and relevant research is a prerequisite for the development of relevant public health strategies and policies, the assurance of adequate health service provisions, and to support high quality, innovative health research. The current EU health information and data infrastructure system is fragmented and sectorial with issues of timeliness and usefulness. In addition, there are still many health domains for which no EU health information of comparable quality exists.

The BRIDGE Health project examined the establishment of a sustainable and integrated EU health information system to support health research and evidence-based policy-making. The best scientific evidence derived from sound data and relevant research is a prerequisite for the development of relevant public health strategies and policies, the assurance of adequate health service provisions, and to support high quality, innovative health research. The current EU health information and data infrastructure system is fragmented and sectorial with issues of timeliness and usefulness. In addition, there are still many health domains for which no EU health information of comparable quality exists.

The BRIDGE Health project examined the establishment of a sustainable and integrated EU health information system, as requested by the Council of the European Union. After thorough analysis, BRIDGE Health concluded that the creation of a European Research Infrastructure Consortium on Health Information for Research and Evidence-based Policy (HIREP-ERIC) is, at this time, the most feasible solution taking into consideration several factors including the political climate. The HIREP-ERIC is the appropriate tool to overcome obstacles and facilitate the governance of health information activities in the EU in a way that best supports evidence-based health policies, investment, and research.

A HIREP-ERIC would support policy and decision-making and strengthen programme action in a coherent and sustainable way with the overall aim of improving individual and population health outcomes. This would be achieved by coordinating standardized, high-quality health data collection and analysis, facilitating research on population health and health system performance, improving access to data for research and policy development, and providing technical support to Member States.

In this workshop the concept of the HIREP-ERIC will be introduced, setting out its activities and structure. The core activities will then be further elaborated by individual presentations around generating, managing, exchanging and translating knowledge in health information. BRIDGE Health already set the bases for those activities by building on successful EU projects. Those can be integrated and further developed in a HIREP-ERIC once established. Participants to the workshop will be able to discuss and provide feedback on the current developments. This will allow for a wider audience to shape the structure of a future health information infrastructure in the EU and the future of health information in the EU as a consequence.
Key messages:
- Implementing the European Research Infrastructure Consortium on Health Information is a major step forward in supporting Member States in their health research and evidence based policy-making.
- The European Research Infrastructure Consortium on Health Information builds on existing knowledge and expertise, and takes up health information issues systematically and sustainably.