

PRESS RELEASE

Actions for Chronic Pain Treatment Policy needed in Europe Results from first European Road Map Monitor 2011 revealed

Aachen/Hamburg, Germany, 29 September, 2011. During the 7th Congress of the European Federation of the IASP® Chapters (EFIC®) in Hamburg (21-24 September), first insights from the European Road Map Monitor 2011 were presented. The analysis showed initial findings on the strategic international and national implementation of a European “Road Map for Action” for improved pain care in Europe. Preliminary results were given on questions referring to the recognition of pain as a specific health condition, the existence of local stakeholder platforms for best-practice share, and on the status of the implementation of educational programs on pain care as a mandatory teaching subject. The European Road Map Monitor 2011 provides politicians and health care decision makers with a benchmark on national policy in pain care throughout Europe.

The Road Map Monitor 2011 is based on the “Road Map for Action”, the major outcome of the European Symposium “The Societal Impact of Pain 2011”, which took place in the European Parliament in Brussels in May 2011. It outlines seven key policy dimensions on how the EU institutions and member states can effectively address the societal impact of pain at EU level (the full Road Map is available at www.sip-meeting.org/press). Moreover, the Road Map is endorsed by more than 55 organisations across Europe from different backgrounds reflecting the broad relevance this document has for the European Union.

In order to monitor the implementation of the SIP Road Map for Action nationally on a yearly basis, the Road Map Monitor questionnaire has been developed. In addition to the seven policy dimensions from the Road Map for Action which are being evaluated, other questions regarding the major achievements and major problems a country is encountering with regard to their local pain policy, were asked. The analysis was conducted from data from 27 countries.

The preliminary results were presented by Prof. Rolf-Detlef Treede from the Medical Faculty Mannheim, Heidelberg University, Germany on Friday evening (23rd September), during the symposium “Societal Impact of Pain in Europe”, which aimed at supporting the multi-stakeholder discussion regarding the future pain care lobby at EU level and national collaborative approaches. “We created the European Road Map Monitor in order to facilitate the exchange of information between the different member states”, Treede explained. “It is an instrument where we ask healthcare specialists in different countries about the state of the art, about making the right of pain treatment reality in their countries.”

First key results can be summarised as follows:

- In most European countries a local platform advocating pain patients' needs and pain policy is in place, however **cooperation in policy-making with patient advocacy groups** still needs to be developed
- There is a general lack of **recognition by national authorities** of the right of every citizen to have access to adequate pain care (demonstrated by a regulation or policy)
- **Patient access to pain care** (diagnosis, treatment, medication) is not sufficiently ensured
- **Pain medicine and pain care** have only been introduced **as mandatory teaching** subjects in two countries; pain experts are urgently required
- An **educational programme** on pain pathophysiology for the general public ("pain is real") needs to be launched in virtually all countries
- Few activities have been implemented by national authorities to **strengthen pain research** addressing the societal impact of pain and the burden of chronic pain on healthcare, social-, and employment sectors. This will delay progress in pain care in the long-term.
- Chronic pain treatment **policy ensuring adequate waiting times and financing** (early diagnosis and secondary prevention) has rarely been implemented
- For the future a **consensus finding process** needs to be initiated at local level integrating all stakeholders represented in the SIP platform at EU level (IASP chapter, professional organisations, patient advocacy groups)

These preliminary results give a first impression of what is expected from the completed Road Map Monitor once finalised and published in the near future. The aim is to constantly monitor the progress of the implementation of the Road Map for Action throughout Europe and communicate the findings of the European Road Map Monitor 2011 to National and EU governments to improve policy-making regarding the societal impact of pain in Europe.

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Notes to Editors:

About the multi-stakeholder platform Societal Impact of Pain (SIP)

The "Societal Impact of Pain" (SIP) is an international platform created in 2010 and aims to raise awareness of the relevance of the impact that pain has on our societies, health and economic systems, exchanging information and sharing best-practices across all member states of the European Union, and developing and fostering European-wide policy strategies & activities for improved pain care in Europe. The platform provides opportunities for discussion for health care professionals, pain advocacy groups, politicians, insurances, representatives of health authorities, regulators and budget holders.



Responsibility for the scientific framework of the SIP platform rests with the European Federation of IASP® Chapters (EFIC®). The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for logistics, support and organisation.

For more information, please visit www.sip-meetings.org.

About EFIC

The European Federation of IASP® chapters (EFIC®) is a multidisciplinary professional organisation in the field of pain science and medicine, made up of the 35 European Chapters of National Pain Societies of IASP (International Association for the Study of Pain). Established in 1993, EFIC's 35 constituent chapters represent Pain Societies from 35 countries and close to 20,000 scientists, physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists and other healthcare professionals across Europe, who study pain and treat patients suffering from pain.

For more information, please visit www.efic.org.

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