



COMITÉ PERMANENT DES MÉDECINS EUROPÉENS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS



The role of medical associations in the healthcare systems of European countries

Dr Katrín Fjeldsted, CPME President

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Introducing CPME

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe.

We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.



Introducing CPME

- Promoting high quality equitable patient care through best possible medical education, training and practice conditions
- Ensuring patient safety through effective regulatory framework
- Defending health and healthcare in policy discussions



Introducing CPME

- Representing 34 National Medical Associations across Europe
- Engaging with EU institutions and stakeholders through its Secretariat in Brussels
- Supporting members
- Working in close partnership and cooperation with other European and international medical organisations



Examples of action on professional issues

- CPME strongly supports the free and independent representation of doctors through democratic institutions set up for this purpose.
- CPME supports professional self-regulation of doctors and believes this provides coherence and expertise of professional qualifications, ethical questions, clinical guidelines and quality assurance.



Protecting the regulatory framework

- Endorsing professional regulatory framework: co-signature of joint Charter for Liberal Professions calling on EU institutions to i.a.
- *“strengthen the role of liberal professions and support these professions within their competences”, “acknowledge that a decision to deregulate liberal professions, without considering all possible consequences, could lead to a decline in quality and in the full coverage of supply, as for example with health services.”*



Strengthening the profession's representation

- Supporting members: calls on national governments to strengthen and support NMA in its representative and regulatory competence e.g. in Czech Republic (2007), Slovenia (2009), Hungary (2010), Turkey (2013)
- *“CPME emphasizes the importance for patients, the profession, and society of the independence of regulatory authorities, which can then act, and be seen to act, in a manner free of political interference, thereby functioning as a truly independent guarantor of the quality of medical care .”*



Safeguarding quality of care

- Defending NMAs' competences: calls on EU, ministries and national/European standardisation bodies to stop standardisation initiatives
- *“Guidelines and standards for professional practice developed on the basis of the national competences [...], be they governmental or self-regulatory, have a legitimate basis [...]. This balance [between professional autonomy and liability] is embedded in the regulatory framework of the profession[...].”*



Examples of action on system issues

- Doctors can act as advocates not only for the interests of the medical profession, but for the broader healthcare system in particular the most vulnerable patients.
- Doctors play a crucial role in defending patient safety and quality of care in policy decisions and promoting a ‘health in all policies’ approach.



Enabling policy coherence

- Illustrating link between regulations and patient safety: joint statement with European Medical Organisations on review of Working Time Directive 2003/88/EC
- *“The European Medical Organisations believe that it is vital in the interest of the healthcare workforce and their patients to maintain high standards of protection from long working hours and degrading working conditions.”*



Defending public health interest

- Supporting national policy initiatives: joint action with British Medical Association calling on EU institutions to permit Scottish government to implement law on minimum unit pricing of alcohol
- *“As health advocates, we believe that the evidenced health gain achievable through the introduction of measures to affect pricing should take priority over trade considerations.”*



Safeguarding patients' rights

- Advocacy for (vulnerable) patients' rights: co-signature of Doctors of the World 'European Declaration of Health Professionals'
- *“We refuse to denounce any undocumented migrants to (immigration) authorities. We also refuse any criminalisation of providing health care services to undocumented migrants.”*



Conclusion

- National Medical Associations fulfil a crucial role not only for the medical profession, but for patients, the healthcare system and the population as a whole.
- CPME will continue to support NMAs in their objective of consolidating the independent and democratic representation of the national medical profession.
- CPME calls on governments to recognise NMAs' role, support their activities and consult them throughout their policy process.