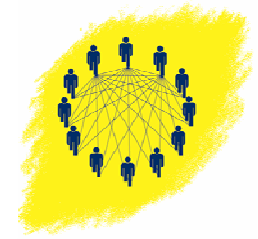


# **SIMPATIE-project: Safety Improvement for Patients in Europe**



## **Background**

The SIMPATIE-project was among the accepted proposals for co-financing in the call for proposals from the European Commission on 'Public Health – 2004' (OJ 2004/C52, 27 February 2004).

The SIMPATIE-project started the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2005. It has a duration of two years.

Partners in the project are:

- CBO: Dutch Institute for Healthcare Improvement (project leader)
- CoE: Council of Europe
- CPME: Standing Committee for European Doctors
- ESQH: European Society of Quality in Healthcare
- HAS: Haute Autorité de Santé in France (former ANEAS)
- HOPE: Standing Committee of the Hospitals of the European Union
- LMCA: Long-term Medical Conditions Alliance UK

## **Summary of the SIMPATIE-project**

Patient Safety is now recognised internationally as a health quality issue. There is good evidence of the level of harm to citizens and the cost to both healthcare providers and to society of what amounts to preventable harm in delivering healthcare. The cost is such, it can be argued, that eventually it will be recognised as an issue for public health within the Health Threats priority area.

Community action in health policy has been limited to the field of public health for legal reasons. Recent patient mobility (and some related judgements of the European Court of Justice) together with system incompatibility problems raised in the context of cross-border contracting have stimulated debate.

Discussion fora and evidence presented during the High Level Reflection Process in 2002/2003 have contributed to the Work Plan 2004 for the first time specifying patient safety.

The project aims to facilitate free movement of people and services by developing EU-wide commonality and transparency in methodology on patient safety in healthcare institutions. It is multidisciplinary and includes input from patient representatives.

A mapping exercise across a minimum of 20 member and accession states will determine the status of activity and strategic planning on patient safety. A data base with standardised format will be developed which is sustainable i.e. has the potential to be updated regularly and cheaply. Data for benchmarking good practice will be an additional output.

In parallel a working group of experts will develop a common vocabulary, outcome indicators and internal and external instruments for improvement in patient safety, based on a framework of the Council of Europe. Current activities of WHO and OECD will assist in this process.

A third work stream will utilise material from the other two to develop a consensus approach to health strategy in patient safety. The final work stream concentrates on dissemination using established professional, institutional and patient networks.

# **SIMPATIE-project: Safety Improvement for Patients in Europe**



## **General objectives**

Mobility across EU is a benefit to citizens, who are able to obtain healthcare outside of their state. But it represents at the same time a challenge in relation to the quality of the services provided. Health care payers need to be assured that care purchased across borders is at least as good and as safe as at home. Patients have the right to expect safe care across the Union.

There is still a lack of European consensus on the best way to monitor most key patient safety issues. In addition, methodology and interventions for improving safety are diverse and partially not validated. There is a clear need for a concerted European approach.

The objective of this project is to use Europe-wide networks of organizations, experts, professionals and other stakeholders to establish, within two years, a common European set of vocabulary, indicators, internal and external instruments for improvement of safety in health care. The set will be disseminated to parties involved.

## **Specific objectives**

- 1- To establish systematic knowledge repository on patient safety related to legislation, regulation and actions in EU states.
- 2- The Council of Europe recommendation on Prevention of Adverse Events is translated into a practical and usable tool for the work floor.
- 3- A vocabulary (set of definitions) and a set of system and organization indicators / outcome measures related to patient safety is formulated.
- 4- Recommendations for external evaluation of health services, including selected instruments that can be used for improvement, are defined with regard to patient safety.
- 5- Recommendations for internal evaluation of health services, including a set of instruments that can be used for improvement, are defined with regard to patient safety.
- 6- There is an expert consensus on recommendations and instruments, described in above mentioned objectives.
- 7- Results are disseminated to the wider public and involved parties.

## **Contact details**

For further information on the SIMPATIE-project, please contact [simpatie@cbo.nl](mailto:simpatie@cbo.nl) or one of the partners.