

News

The **programme** of the **12th EPH Conference ‘Building bridges for solidarity and public health’**, Marseille, 20-23 November 2019, is now online; <https://ephconference.eu/dynamic-programme-127>. EUPHA HWR is co-organising three workshops; a wide range of health workforce issues are also presented in the oral, pitch and poster sessions.

Presenters must register until 1 August 2019; <https://ephconference.eu/register-107>; for everybody else, early bird registration closes at 1 September 2019. Please read carefully the guidelines for presenters – <https://ephconference.eu/presenter-instructions-113> – and upload your presentations by the deadline, 10 November 2019.

Preconference ‘Skill-mix challenges in the current and future health workforce’, organised by EUPHA HWR and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies in collaboration with The Health Foundation and WHO Regional Office for Europe. Registration is now open – <https://ephconference.eu/2019-pre-conference-programme-225>; please find a draft programme attached to this Newsletter.

EUPHA and the EUPHA section HWR launched a statement **‘Who cares for the health workforce? Call for action in response to the European Union parties’ manifestos’** (Kuhlmann, Batenburg, Dussault); <https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>.

EUPHA HWR participated in the **European Public Health WEEK** to celebrate healthy populations and raise awareness of public health, 13–17 May 2019. Health Workforce issues were linked to the theme ‘Care4Care’, Wednesday, 15 May 2019; https://eupha.org/EUPHW_Full_list_of_events.

The Seventy-second **World Health Assembly**, WHO, Geneva, 20-28 May 2019 (<https://www.who.int/about/governance/world-health-assembly>) has, among other things, also highlighted the importance of the health workforce.

- [A72/23](#) Human resources for health: WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel: third round of national reporting; http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA72/A72_23-en.pdf.
- [A72/24](#) Human resources for health: Global strategy on human resources for health: workforce 2030; http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA72/A72_24-en.pdf.

To-Reach Project has published a draft agenda, which highlights the importance of the health workforce; <https://to-reach.eu/our-strategic-research-agenda/>. Please participate in the consultation and use this opportunity to support health workforce research; <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdFfVWj69SK7z-TVI3tzPI01TWMCb6XI3ILaLQQVlt-ZxUMtg/viewform>; deadline extended until 26 July 2019.

EUPHA HWR warmly welcomes its **new section members!** Everybody working on HWR and want to be connected to EUPHA HWR, please sign up at: <https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>.

Conferences



12th EPH Conference Building bridges for solidarity and public health

Marseille, Palais des Congrès et des Expositions, France, 20-23 November 2019;
<https://ephconference.eu/marseille-2019:-building-bridges-for-solidarity-and-public-health-95>.

Three Workshops related to health workforce issues have been accepted.

- **Care4Care: the migrant care workforce in Europe**

This is a round table and joint session of EUPHA Health Workforce Research (HWR), Health Services Research (HSR, Judith de Jong), and Public Health Policy and Practice (PHPP, Marleen Bekker). The session highlights that migrant carers form an important part of the health workforce in European countries. It calls for action that health systems must take care of the migrant health workforce and counteract growing nationalism. Following an introduction prepared by an international research team and additional case studies from Austria (Michelle Falkenbach) and Italy (Emmanuele Pavolini), a panel will critically discuss how to govern the migrant care workforce in ways that improve both integration in the host country and solidarity across Europe and globally. Discussants include Gabrielle Jacob, WHO Regional Office for Europe, EUPHA President Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat and Scott Greer, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies.

- **Building skills and capacity for a future health workforce**

This skills building workshop is organised by EUPHA HWR (Ronald Batenburg and Ellen Kuhlmann). It raises awareness that building skills and institutional capacity is key to improve health workforce research and policy, and that people-centred care and universal healthcare coverage call for new skills and education programmes. Next to two presentations from EUPHA HWR (Kuhlmann/Batenburg/Dussault and Ungureanu), the workshop includes contributions from Gabrielle Jacob, WHO Regional Office for Europe and from ASPHER President Kasia Czabanowska.

- **Health workforce meets health services research II: Tackling regional inequalities**

This joint session EUPHA Health Services Research (HSR, Judith de Jong) and HWR continues a very fruitful collaboration between our two EUPHA sections, aiming to illuminate the close connections and interdependencies of health services and workforce research. This workshop will focus on regional aspects, comprising three presentations: Peter Groenewegen on a 34 country comparison, John Hansen on regional shortages in a small country, and Luís Velez-Lapão on the capacity of e-Health solutions. The results seek to highlight, firstly, that workforce policies should focus on retaining primary care workforce in rural areas and integrated policies should attract new primary care practices, and secondly, that both in primary

care and hospital care new solutions are being sought which should help resolve regional differences in access to care and attractiveness for the health workforce. The workshop is scheduled for Friday, 22 November, 11.10-12.10.

EUPHA HWR will also organise a **Meet the Network** session – everybody welcome!

Please visit the conference programme and watch out for details and updates; <https://ephconference.eu/dynamic-programme-127>.

Recent and forthcoming Conferences



Skill-mix innovation in primary and chronic care: mobilizing the health workforce

The Observatory Venice Summer School 2019 will focus on health workforce strategies and policies, 21–27 July 2019; <https://theobservatorysummerschool.org/>.



The European Health Management Association held its annual conference on June 17-19 in Dipoli, Espoo, Finland. As usual, health workforce was among the topics addressed in various sessions of the conference, workshops, round tables and research presentations. EUPHA HWR Vice-President Ronald Batenburg acted as moderator of a session on sustainability, whereas Board Member (Representative of Early Career Researchers/PhD Students) Marius Ungureanu presented findings on internationalisation of medical education; for more information, <https://www.ehma2019.org/>.

Projects



The To-Reach project – transferring innovation in health systems – has developed a strategic research agenda as a result of a EU-wide consultation of a wide range of stakeholders in health

policy, research and practice (draft agenda, May 2019; <https://to-reach.eu/our-strategic-research-agenda/>). The **agenda highlights**, among other things, the **strategic role of the health professionals**.

‘The Health Care Professionals (HCPs) are central players in delivering high quality care. As such they play a critical role in proving access and quality health care for the population. Insight in the problems of the HCPs is crucial in order to identify and implement more effective ways to organise and manage high quality care and innovation. Involving CPs in an EU wide research initiative will allow to get the HCPs perspective on high quality care and innovation’ (To-Reach, 2019: 33).

The Agenda also reveals a number of strategic research needs in relation the health workforce:

‘How to distribute tasks and responsibilities, and rethinking training and practice that enables health professionals to work together more effectively in integrated services; mechanisms for long-term planning of the health workforce; and how to address regional imbalances?’ (To-Reach, 2019: 41).

Interesting, an in-depth discussion of the strategic research agenda also brings the perspective of health professionals and their work and life into perspective:

‘How to curb the declining quality of life of health professionals, with increased levels of absenteeism, burnout and frequent desires to quit the profession as well as high levels of prevalence of addiction, suicidal ideation and harassment and violence?’ (To-Reach, 2019, 41).

This reflects well an approach that Bodenheimer and Sinsky (2014; <http://www.annfamned.org/content/12/6/573.full>) called the ‘quadruple aim’ of healthcare. Quadruple aim highlights that – next to the ‘triple aim’: improving the experience of care, improving population health, and reducing healthcare costs – we **need to care for the professional in order to care for the patient**.

The EUPHA section HWR and the To-Reach project have collaborated and jointly organised a Preconference in 2018 in Ljubljana related to health workforce development. The research agenda now provides useful guidance and support for strengthening health workforce research as a priority issue of health systems and policies; the draft agenda is available at: <https://to-reach.eu/our-strategic-research-agenda/>.

An **online consultation** (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdFfVWj69SK7z-TVI3tzPI01TWMCb6XI3ILaLQQVlt-ZxUMtg/viewform>) on the Strategic Research Agenda is still open until Friday, 26 July 2019. The aim of the consultation is to gather inputs on the document from a wide range of stakeholders both at national and European level to move towards the development of a future EU joint research programme on health services and health systems research. The results of the online consultation will support both the advancement of the Strategic Research Agenda of TO REACH and the preparation of a future EU Joint Research Programme.

Please participate in the To-Reach online consultation! It is a unique opportunity to bring health workforce issues into the European policy agenda.

For further information please visit the website of the To-Reach Consortium.

Ellen Kuhlmann

Publications

- Agartan TI, Kuhlmann E. New Public Management, physicians and populism: Turkey's experience with health reforms. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 2019; [Epub] DOI: 10.1111/1467-9566.12956
- Kuhlmann E, Shishkin S, Richardson E, Ivanov I, Shvabskii O, Minulin I, Shcheblykina A, Kontsevaya A, Bates K, McKee M. Understanding the role of physicians within the management structure of Russian hospitals. *Health Policy*, 2019; [Epub] DOI: 10.1016/j.healthpol.2019.05.020
- Lancet series: Gender Equality, Norms, and Health;
<https://www.thelancet.com/series/gender-equality-norms-health>
- Health Policy, Special Issue: A people-centred health workforce in Europe: how to make it happen? Guest editors: Ellen Kuhlmann, Ronald Batenburg and Gilles Dussault. This special issue sets the focus on a people-centred health workforce in Europe and brings attention to issues of policy implementation, thus moving the debate one step further. The special issue is closely connected to the work of EUPHA Health Workforce Research and comprises 12 articles and a guest editorial, see <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/health-policy/vol/122/issue/10>.

Please **forward this Newsletter to your colleagues and friends**, who might be interested in health workforce research and in joining the EUPHA Health Workforce Research section. New members are warmly welcome – please sign up; <https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>. The next Newsletter is scheduled for end of September 2019. Please send your notices, conferences, new publications and other relevant information until 20 September 2019 (Kuhlmann.ellen@mh-hannover.de).

Ellen Kuhlmann
EUPHA HWR section President
<https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>



Pre-Conference to the 12th European Public Health Conference
Marseille, 20 November 2019

Skill-mix challenges in the current and future health workforce

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies and
EUPHA 'Health Workforce Research' (HWR) section
in collaboration with the Health Foundation and the WHO Regional Office for Europe

Background. Many countries are facing challenges with the skill mix of the health workforce. Optimizing the skill-mix is a key strategy to strengthen the health workforce and improving health system performance. But identifying really innovative skill-mix models and implementing them is rather challenging. Any effective response to this challenge will need to rest on robust comparative research to identify and assess the 'what' and 'how' of skill-mix innovations. To this end it is of utmost importance to provide a platform for the health workforce research community to develop a common understanding of the health workforce challenges patients, practitioners, policy makers, health systems and researchers are facing. The HWR section of EUPHA provides for this purpose a unique opportunity. We continue with the successful health HWR section pre-conferences and its predecessor in previous years like in Ljubljana, Stockholm and Vienna. This year, we will include both policy and research by inviting policy makers and issue a call for HWF-papers.

Organisation and aims of the pre-conference. The overarching aim of this pre-conference is to bring together the scientific community and foster collaboration on current and future health workforce skill-mix related issues. To this end the workshop will pursue the following concrete objectives:

- Reviewing current skill-mix challenges in countries from a policy makers perspective
- Presenting findings on the effectiveness of skill-mix innovations in primary and chronic care following a call for papers
- Looking over the horizon for new key health workforce challenges and potential solutions

Policy relevance. The health workforce is a key contributor-if not the most important one-to the performance and sustainability of health systems. Policy makers in Europe are therefore eager to learn about developing the composition and skills of the health workforce. Identifying innovations, assessing their effectiveness and transferability are therefore highly important.

Format. The Preconference starts with a brief introduction followed by four thematic sessions and a brief wrap up. The first session focusses on policy makers' perspective towards skill-mix innovations in primary and chronic care. To allow concrete in-depth discussion we will invite from the host country in France the caisse nationale de l'assurance maladie (CNAM), which has a pivotal role in developing the health workforce, This will serve as an entry point for discussion. In the second and third session we will review the findings of scientific papers responding to the call of papers. Session 2 will include papers on sectorial perspectives (prevention and health promotion; acute care, chronic care etc.) while session 3 will focus on specific topics (skill-mix and ehealth; coordination; teamwork etc.). The last session will focus on upcoming challenges both for health systems, policy makers and the scientific community. This is followed by a short wrap up.

Programme

Wednesday, 28 November 2018

8.45-9.00 Welcome

In this brief welcome session we will explain the aims and objectives of the pre-conference and the contents and formats of the individual sessions.

- Introduction, Matthias Wismar, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies and Ellen Kuhlmann, EUPHA section HWR

9.00-10.30 Session I

Skill-mix reforms in France – in the context of international evidence

This session aims to set the scene in terms of the challenge that policy makers are facing. In order to allow for sufficient depth, we will focus on France, the host country of this year's conference. We will review the health workforce challenges and some of the responses including the newly introduced nurses in advanced roles, the medical assistant function under development but also experiences with the ASALEE programme for rural and underserved areas. We will discuss the French experience in the light of international evidence.

- Introduction and facilitation (tbd)
- Keynote, CNAM tbn
- Moderated stakeholder panel
- Discussants and question from the floor

11.00-12.30 Session II

Skill-mix innovations in various segments of primary and chronic care

Primary care comprises a large number of different settings and models of care. Adapting a concept developed by OCED we have invited papers focussing on skill-mix innovations with regards to health promotion and prevention, acute care/transitional care, chronic care (keeping people independent), palliative care and access to care (underserved rural/ deprived urban).

- Introduction (Claudia B Maier TU-Berlin)
- Presentation of five papers from the call and discussion
- Final discussion

13.30-15.00 Session III

Skill-mix innovations for specific roles and tasks

Often, the health workforce needs to adapt to changes introduced by new technologies or new models of care. This includes e.g. digital health, roles in coordination of patients, informal carers, professionals, services and sectors, or the building of effective teams just to name a few. We will discuss 5 abstracts/draft papers selected from a call of papers:

- Introduction and facilitation (Anita Charlesworth, The Health Foundation and Jim Buchan, The Health Foundation and Editor-in-Chief Human Resources for Health)
- Presentation of five papers from the call and discussion
- Final discussion

15.30-17.00 Session IV

Health workforce challenges now and in the future

In recent years the scientific community has contributed significantly to the better understanding of policy responses arising from health professional mobility, recruitment and retention, health workforce planning and many other issues. The field however remains dynamic and often the resolution of one problem is the source of another one. This session therefore shall serve to discuss upcoming health workforce challenges for policy makers, health systems and researcher.

- Introduction and facilitation Marieke Kroezen, Erasmus Medical Center and Ronald Batenburg, NIVEL
- Keynote
- Discussants

17.00-17.30 Closing comments

Gabrielle Jacob, WHO Regional Office for Europe, and all session chairs together with the workshop participants draw conclusions from the day including further perspectives for collaboration. Building on the previous sessions we should further discuss perspectives for collaboration and next year's conference.



Who cares for the health workforce?

Call for Action in response to the European Union parties' manifestos

15 May 2019

An analysis of election manifestos of parties participating in the forthcoming EU elections has shown that health is not a priority for most of them in spite of this topic being considered as highly important by citizens.¹ The situation is especially worrisome for the health workforce: there is a total absence of the topic in the manifestos. We therefore call for EU parliamentarians and policymakers to pay more attention to health workforce issues.

1. The economic case: the health workforce is about 10% of the total workforce and demand for health workers is increasing. The education and employment of health workers account for up to 60% of total health costs and for how well the other 40% is used.
2. The equity of access to health services case: most, if not all EU Member States, experience shortages of health workers, as evidenced by the number of unfilled positions. In some countries, this is due to an insufficient training of new workers, and in others, mainly in Southern and Eastern Europe, this is due to emigration flows that reduce the availability of qualified health personnel. Inequities also result from imbalances in the geographical distribution of workers and the consequent limited coverage of services in rural and poor urban areas.
3. The competencies case: the rapidly changing burden of disease, with non-communicable and chronic diseases becoming more prevalent, to the spread of eHealth, mHealth, and artificial intelligence, and a more demanding users of services, make it imperative to equip health workers with competencies adapted to this new context.

Universal coverage and people-centered health services require a workforce that is sufficient numerically, and that has the competencies and motivation to provide the services that correspond to the needs of European citizens.

We urge future parliamentarians and future commissioners to consider supporting Member States' efforts to build a health workforce fit to 'Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages', the Sustainable Development Goal, which all Heads of States have committed to pursue. While respecting the autonomy of its Member States in organising and managing their health system, the EU can help in various ways:

- By supporting research to understand what makes the health workforce more efficient, e.g. how to better divide and organise work and how to use the full potential of existing and future workers. This is a pre-requisite to the design of evidence-informed policies.

¹ EUPHA statement (2 May 2019), 'What are the European Union political parties planning for your health? A response to the European Union parties' manifestos'. Available at: https://eupha.org/repository/advocacy/EUPHA_statement_What_are_the_European_Union_political_parties_planning_for_your_health.pdf

- By facilitating the sharing of lessons from successful and less successful interventions to improve the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of the health workers, e.g. in the areas of recruitment, deployment and retention of health staff, in the governance, regulation and management of the whole workforce, from the most qualified to community workers and carers.
- By motivating, through advocacy and incentives, country authorities to invest in the building of an effective and efficient health workforce as a strategy that not only aims at improving the well-being of citizens, but also at contributing to economic development.



EUPHA section Health Workforce Research (HWR)
<https://eupha.org/health-workforce-research>

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