



EFN Recommendations on “Addressing the underfunding of Prevention & Long-Term Care”

The value-based healthcare approach changed the focus and rightly makes it possible to begin to look at the value of health and healthcare services, seen as the outcomes that matters to patients/people, and the costs of achieving these outcomes. Therefore, taking into account the different national financial models, it is crucial to develop payment and reimbursement systems based on nursing care pathways, including nursing indicators to measure outcomes. In particular, to finance the health and social care ecosystems, a shift is needed from the traditional hospital sector towards the community care, especially to finance long-term care (LTC). To achieve the ambitious target of healthier life for every European citizen by 2030, Europe needs to shift from efficiency in health, social and informal care delivery towards higher public health funds allocation¹, with EU countries developing more LTC services in all settings available. It is therefore key to address the underfunding of LTC in the EU by:

1. Adopt value-based health care - To ensuring a thorough implementation of an EU value-based health and social care ecosystem approach, focussing on outcomes, using more efficient and dynamic systems moving towards more bundled care pathways payments schemes. This implies shifting from paying volume of interventions towards prioritising continuity of care, prevention and LTC.
2. Support Universal Health Coverage through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights - The EU could assist in capacity-building and access efforts to reach Universal Health Coverage. More efforts should be made to improve access to care in all Member States, including prevention and primary care.
3. Promote a holistic approach, instead of financing silo's - Given the history of most health and social care ecosystems in the EU, in which payments are made for every consultation or treatment, the new structures will require a financial mindset shift that will involve a move away from medical individualism to a far more collaborative approach.
4. Develop payment and reimbursement systems based on pathways, including prevention and LTC - Payment and reimbursement systems based on pathways, including prevention and LTC, rather than individual and disease specific interventions will help governments to make systems more sustainable.
5. Invest in Prevention to save lives and reduce costs - The European Commission should support the development of a framework to help Member States in developing and implementing guidelines for prevention, including patient/citizen empowerment.
6. Publish health data in the European Semester - A set of healthcare and nursing indicators can be published in the European Semester on the basis of best research. More frequent updates and more funding for research and detailed statistics could lead to better informed policy decisions.

To conclude, team-based approaches, along with a greater focus on primary care, prevention, and coordination of the entire circle will help providers to prevent illness and to manage chronic conditions rather than treat them after they have appeared or become acute. Financial systems should therefore be reviewed to address underfunding of LTC.

Addressing the Underfunding of Prevention & LTC – April 2019

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¹ How to make sense of health system efficiency comparisons? http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/362912/policy-brief-27-eng.pdf?ua=1