

EU Public Health Programme EU Funding Opportunities for NHS Organisations

1. Summary

Funding opportunities are available to NHS organisations under the European Union's Public Health Programme. Under the Programme a call for proposals for projects was launched in February 2009 which provides for funding opportunities in the following areas:

- Improving citizens' health security
- Promoting health and reducing health inequalities

NHS organisations are eligible for funding under the Programme. Please contact the NHS European Office for further information or if you are intending in getting involved in a project as we may be able to provide support and advice (neha.dave@nhsconfed.org).

The deadline for applications is **20 May 2009**.

2. What is the Public Health Programme?

The Public Health Programme is a key element in the delivery of the European Union's Public Health Strategy and runs from 2008 to 2013. The Programme intends to complement initiatives being undertaken by Member States and add value to European health policies. It provides co-financing for innovative projects, conferences, and specialised networks or bodies in the field of public health. Its objectives are to:

- improve citizens' health security: by exchanging best practices on prevention strategies, such as combating health threats and improving patient safety through high-quality and safe healthcare;
- promote health: by promoting health and reducing health inequalities between EU Member States and regions;
- generate and disseminate health information and knowledge: by building capacity for development and implementation of effective public health policies, particularly in areas of high need.

The Programme has a budget of €321.5 million for the period 2008 to 2013 and projects can receive EU co-financing of up to 60% of the cost.

The Commission's Executive Agency for Health and Consumer (EAHC) manages and runs the Programme. Each year EAHC publishes a Work Plan which provides details on the budget available and a list of all priority areas for action that will be covered. In February the Commission published its 2009 Work Plan, which stated that approximately €48.2 million will be available for all activities listed in the Plan.

Following publication of the Work Plan, the Commission launched a call for proposals for projects. The call includes many topics which are of relevance to NHS organisations.

For further details on the Programme and the call for project proposals please visit the EAHC website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/index.html>.

3. Areas of funding relevant to NHS organisations in the call

Of the €48.2 million approximately €24 million has been allocated for this call to fund projects which have a European dimension and are innovative in nature. The rest of the money will be allocated for other calls for proposals for international conferences, joint actions with EU agencies, and for tenders on particular topics.

The duration of these projects should not exceed three years. The projects are to be carried out by partners across several Member States and the projects should have a European element, such as addressing interoperability issues across borders or exchange of best practices between Member States. There are several areas of relevance to NHS organisations in the call for project proposals. An overview of these areas is listed below:

Improving citizens' health security

- Developing prevention: exchanging practices on vaccination in Member States, in particular hard to reach populations
- Supporting preparedness through underpinning rapid development of pharmaceutical counter measures including vaccines for new and emerging health threats; looking at the health sector's adaptation to climate change
- Improving early detection and control for health threats including communicable diseases
- Enhancing capacity building by supporting the implementation of the International Health Regulations
- Improving rational use of antibiotics and fighting against antimicrobial and antiviral drug resistance
- Improving patient safety through high-quality and safe healthcare
- Safety of blood, tissue and cells: developing methodologies focusing on reporting systems and rapid response to serious adverse events and reactions

Promoting health and reducing health inequalities

- Promoting health in all policy areas through promotion of health impact assessments and developing methodologies to promote health in policy development and implementation
- Public health capacity building:
 - methods to improve interaction between public health researchers and policymakers

- developing handbooks to support the integration of mental health promotion and mental disorder prevention
- promoting of the uptake of injury prevention in vocational training in public health
- improving communication skills of health professionals in order to better address the needs of patients
- Promoting health investment in Member States and regions through exchange of best practices
- Developing strategies and good practices to tackle health inequalities within and between Member States
- Implementation and exchange of good practices on nutrition and promoting physical activity
- Promoting sexual health policies and prevention of sexually transmitted infections; and tackling HIV/AIDS, with a special focus on Eastern Europe
- Promoting mental health, preventing mental disorders and combating stigma
- Development of innovative strategies and best practices, including health professionals and teachers' training programmes to combat tobacco addiction
- Development of indicators or indexes specifically concerning cancer to better support action on cancer across the EU
- Developing European cooperation and networks linking experts on rare diseases
- Developing European health based ventilation guidelines for public places to help in revising existing building codes and practices in the light of energy efficiency of buildings

Detailed information on each of these areas and particular topics for project proposals is in the call document available on the EAHC website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/projects.html>.

4. How to apply and guidance for interested organisations

NHS organisations interested in proposing a project under any area should consult the Commission's call document.

Proposals for projects under this call should focus on activities such as exchanges of best practice, use of existing models, and addressing the interoperability of systems between Member States, rather than ones which are predominantly research focused. This is to avoid overlap with projects funded under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) which includes a health research strand.

Applicants should also note that up to **60% of EU funding** is available. Applications for funding should be made as part of a European consortium consisting of several partners from different EU Member States.

The deadline for applicants is **20 May 2009**.

NHS organisations interested in applying for funding are invited to contact the NHS European Office. The Office can provide assistance in:

- providing further information on the Programme and this call;
- liaising with the European Commission to discuss possible plans for a project proposal and whether the ideas correspond with the Commission's priorities for funding;
- finding a consortium of partners around a specific topic of interest;
- identifying a European partner to cooperate with in developing a project proposal.

5. Examples of projects which are currently funded under the Programme

Below are examples of two projects currently funded by the Programme and involving NHS participation. This is to give an indication of the type of projects which are funded under this Programme:

Alerting System and Development of a Health Surveillance System for the Deliberate Release of Chemicals by Terrorists (ASHT Phase II)

The ASHT project was set up to provide a rapid alert early warning system in the event of chemical incident in the EU. The project aims to further develop an operationally sustainable health monitoring system, improve current data transfer systems, and to share information and health effects data. The project will run for three years with a budget of €600,000 and includes partners from the UK, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Lithuania and Germany. UK partners are the Health Protection Agency and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust.

Working with Communities to Reduce Health Inequalities: Protecting Children and Young People from Tobacco

The objective of the project is to develop effective methods of engaging local communities and "peer groups" to bring about lifestyle changes that generate positive health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. Focusing on tobacco control priorities, this project aims to develop the tools to reduce high smoking prevalence rates amongst young people, and the exposure of children and young people to second-hand smoke. The project targets children and young people from socially excluded and disadvantaged communities that have poor health indicators. The project is running for two years with a budget of €390,000. The project involves partners from across 15 Member States. UK partners are Manchester Primary Care Trust and Liverpool Primary Care Trust.

For more examples of projects funded under the Public Health Programme please see the EAHC project database: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html>

Additional information

EAHC homepage: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/index.html>

EAHC health call for proposals for projects: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/projects.html>

EAHC database of previously funded projects: <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html>

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