The Future of Public Health: a European perspective

Walter Ricciardi. European Public Health Association, President
- Current scenario

- State of the art of public health research in Europe

- Role of EUPHA and national ph associations

- Future perspectives
We are living the Third Healthcare Revolution
Doctors’ views: greatest innovations of the second healthcare revolution

- MRI and CT scanning
- ACE inhibitors
- Balloon angioplasty
- Statins
- Mammography
- Coronary artery bypass graft surgery
- Proton pump inhibitors and H2 blockers
- SSRIs and recent non-SSRI antidepressants
- Cataract extraction and lens implants
- Hip and knee replacement
- Ultrasonography
- Gastrointestinal endoscopy
- Inhaled steroids for asthma
- Laparoscopic surgery
- Non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Cardiac enzymes

Source: Fuchs, VR et al, Physicians’ views of the relative importance of thirty medical innovations, Health Affairs, Sep – Oct 2001
The Second Healthcare Revolution has not solved the Magnificent 8: the eternal, ubiquitous problems of healthcare

- Errors and mistakes
- Poor quality healthcare
- Waste
- Unknowing variations in policy and practice
- Poor patient experience
- Overenthusiastic adoption of interventions of low value
- Failure to get new evidence into practice
- Failure to manage uncertainty
and will not solve the new additional challenges health services are going to face

• Rising expectations
• Increasing need due to
  – population aging
  – obesity due to too much food and too little exercise
  – new technology
• Climate change which will create health problems and health emergencies and lead to Carbon constraints
• Financial constraints
The Third Revolution is different

- Flexible
- Pervasive
- Inclusive
- Convergent
THE PROFESSIONALS ?
The Third Revolution is different

- Flexible
- Pervasive
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Evidence

- There is a marked heterogeneity between countries across Europe
- There are different research priorities in different European Regions
- Considerable variation exists in public health research funding process and development across the European Region.
- A common issue is the vast amount of barriers to undertaking better research, regarding both structures and personnel.
• Research findings in public health are published primarily for the research community, and often they do not reach policy makers and practitioners.

• The knowledge gap between public health research and policy/practice is wide and needs to be reduced.
• There is also a need
  – to disseminate results from existing collaborative research,
  – and to build capacity through exchange
We are also living a gathering storm. The unthinkable...
Growth rate compared to same quarter previous year (seasonally adjusted)
What might we expect for health?

- In brief:
  - Suicides up
  - Road traffic deaths down
  - Alcohol-related deaths — it depends on how easily alcohol is available
  - Infectious disease — almost impossible to predict
But it is possible to do something

• Several factors markedly increase resilience
  – Strong social networks
    • Membership of trade unions, churches, social clubs
  – A strong welfare state
    • Especially active labour market programmes that get people back into work (or at least give them the message that someone cares)
Can the National PH Associations find these opportunities within EUPHA?
• EUPHA and National Public Health Associations need to better cooperate in order to find the most efficacious answers to common but also to specific problems.
Short history

- Founded in 1992
- Grown from 12 to 40 countries
72 EUPHA members

- 41 National Public Health Associations from 35 European countries
- 18 Institutional members
- 7 Individual members from 5 countries
- 8 Associate members (European NGOs)
- 14’000 public health professionals
Vision and Mission:

Our vision
Improved health and reduced health inequalities for all Europeans. We seek to support our members to increase the impact of public health in Europe, adding value to the efforts of regions and states, national and international organisations, and individual public health experts.

Our mission
To build capacity and knowledge in the field of public health, and to support practice and policy through scientific evidence, producing and sharing knowledge with our members and partners in Europe.
EUPHA office

• Based at NIVEL in Utrecht, NL
• 4 staff members at NIVEL 2.8 fte
• Editorial office at Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden
• Publisher in Oxford, UK
• Responsible for the execution of all decisions taking by the GB and Executive Council
Four pillars
Research
Policy
Practice
Training and Education

Two strategic objectives
Knowledge building
Capacity building
What we already have

- Theme-specific networks
- EPH conference
- European Journal of Public Health
- OUP Bookclub
- Monthly newsletter
- Website
What we are developing

- EUPHA reports
- EUPHActs
- EUPHApedia
- Snapshot
- EUPHAAnxt
In conclusion

The European social model

• A system of transfers
  – From rich to poor
  – From young to old
  – From employed to unemployed
  – From healthy to ill
In conclusion

• The citizens of many countries in Europe are paying a huge price, in blood and treasure, for the mistakes of a few

• We are only beginning to see the health consequences … but they are likely to be profound in some countries

• So what are we going to do about it?
Free health care – no thanks....
We’d rather die
Daniel Hannan MEP on the NHS

“A 60 year mistake”
We stand at a critical point

• So far, the European welfare state, and with it universal health coverage, has withstood shocks and attacks
• But this time, the forces against it are stronger than ever
• Will it survive?
The future is not something we are going
it is something we have to imagine create plan and build
Where am I?

You must be a researcher...

Yeah, but how did you know?

Because you gave me a very accurate but totally irrelevant answer.

You must be a policy maker...

Because you don’t know where you are, you don’t know where you are going and you are blaming me for all this mess.
REALLY HOPE TO HAVE YOU AND GERMANY ON BOARD!