FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EPF Conference: How Patients’ and Families’ empowerment can improve Patient Safety**

**BRUSSELS, 28 September 2016 – The European Patients’ Forum (EPF) opens registrations for a 2-day conference on patient safety on 8 and 9 November, in Brussels. The event aims at exploring how the empowerment of patients, their families and informal carers could improve the current staggering figures of patient safety and health-related adverse events.**

Patient safety is a strategic priority for EPF and goes to the heart of its work for equitable, patient-centred healthcare systems across the EU. Despite being a fundamental right for every patient, patient safety still remains an area facing many challenges and where significant improvement is needed. Health-care related adverse events occur in around 8-12% of hospitalisations, and a 2006 Eurobarometer survey showed that 23% of respondents had been directly affected by medical error, 18% had experienced a serious error in a hospital, and 11% had been prescribed the wrong medication.

Could patient and family empowerment help to improve these figures? To ensure care services are designed around patients’ needs, patient involvement is necessary at all levels in the system.

Under the title ‘*Patient and family empowerment for better patient safety*’, EPF organises this conference to raise awareness across the EU institutions, Member States and stakeholders about the link between patient safety and patient empowerment. It will also be the chance to identify knowledge gaps and opportunities for further study, and it will provide a platform for discussion around the following issues:

* The ethics of patient involvement in safety: taking responsibility or being burdened with responsibility?
* Challenges for patient empowerment and involvement in acute care settings.
* Challenges for healthcare professionals: is a fundamental culture change needed?
* Communication: a risk factor or an opportunity to improve safety?

Speakers and participants from a wide range of backgrounds will contribute to the debate with their different approaches. Patients, family members, informal carers, healthcare professionals, researchers, industry and commercial bodies, and policymakers are all invited to attend.

The outcomes of this conference will form the basis for the development of a set of “core competencies” for patients and families to involve them in the area of patient safety.

Registrations are available via this [form](https://eupatient.wufoo.com/forms/mb9h0kp00c7n4r/) and open until 10 October.

To know more about the event, click [here](http://www.eu-patient.eu/Events/upcoming-events/epf-conference-on-patient-and-family-empowerment-for-better-patient-safety2/).

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The **European Patients’ Forum (EPF)** was founded in 2003 to ensure that the patients’ community drives policies and programmes that affect patients’ lives to bring changes empowering them to be equal citizens in the EU.

EPF currently represents 67 members, which are national coalitions of patients organisations and disease-specific patient organisations working at European level, and. EPF reflects the voice of an estimated 150 million patients affected by various chronic diseases throughout Europe.

EPF’s vision for the future is that all patients with chronic and/or lifelong conditions in the EU have access to high quality, patient-centred equitable health and social care.

The EPF strategic goals focus on areas such as health literacy, healthcare design and delivery, patient involvement, patient empowerment, sustainable patients’ organisations and non-discrimination.

[www.eu-patient.eu](http://www.eu-patient.eu)

**Contact persons:**

Laurent Louette  
Communications Officer  
[laurent.louette@eu-patient.eu](mailto:laurent.louette@eu-patient.eu)  
+32 (0)2 280 23 35

Kaisa Immonen  
EPF Director of Policy  
E [policy@eu-patient.eu](mailto:policy@eu-patient.eu)  
T +32 (0)2 280 23 36