FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EUROPEAN PATIENTS FORUM – ANNUAL REPORT**

**BRUSSELS, 26 July 2016 – The European Patients’ Forum welcomes the deal reached yesterday between the Council and the European Parliament on medical devices. However, more information on reprocessing and patient involvement is required.**

2015 was another significant year for EPF and our membership. Our flagship initiative, the EPF Patient Empowerment Campaign was launched successfully in May 2015 with a ground-breaking conference. EPF has been delighted by the feedback, enthusiasm and uptake of the campaign both at European and at national level, among policy makers and the health community alike. The concept of Patient Empowerment is central to EPF’s work and we will continue to strive to make it integral to European and national policies on health and social care.

**Equitable Access to Healthcare** is the other pivotal element of our work. 2015 saw the foundation of the European Parliament Interest Group on Patient Access to Healthcare. Together with the Patient Access Partnership (PACT), we were proud to receive a large and cross-party support from many MEPs. The two well-attended meetings organised in 2015 demonstrated the importance of patient access for European and national strategies. On the policy side, our access pillar was reinforced by activities on discrimination, cross-border healthcare, and quality and safety of care.

Our vibrant network of **Members** is our raison d’être. Their diversity and commitment is our strength and we will continue to strive to meet their needs to enable them to both benefit from and contribute to a collective patients’ voice. SM

EPF Secretary General, Nicola Bedlington commented on the annual report: “*We can only welcome this agreement, as it clearly paves the way towards a safer and more robust system for medical devices. However, to fully assess its impact on patient safety and quality of care, more details are needed on the crucial topics of reprocessing and patient involvement*”.

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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 patient’ 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.

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[**Act now for Patient Empowerment: Sign the pledge here!**](http://www.eu-patient.eu/campaign/PatientsprescribE/take-action/)

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