European Liver
Patients Association
ELPA

QUALITY OF CARE AND PATIENT SAFETY – CORNERSTONES OF THE LEGISLATION

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DIRECTIVE 2011/24/EU – ARTICLE 4:

“...Member States retain responsibility for **providing** safe, high quality, efficient and quantitatively adequate healthcare to citizens on their territory...”

OTHER „PROVIDING“ PARTS I

Providers of cross-border healthcare services should ensure that patients have all the necessary information to make an informed choice with respect to:

- Treatment options and their availability;
- Quality and safety of the health care;
- Invoices
- Prices and reimbursement policies

OTHER „PROVIDING“ PARTS II

The Directive states that cross-border healthcare has to be provided to patients in accordance with the safety and quality standards and guidelines that are in place in the Member State of treatment, and where applicable in accordance with EU legislation (Article 4(1))

or:

Member States must provide information to patients on their national standards and guidelines on quality and safety (Article 4(2)). They are also required to cooperate with each other in the area of safety and quality standards and guidelines (Article 10)

OTHER „PROVIDING“ PARTS III

The Directive is based on the principle of non-discrimination:

1. Patients should be treated equally despite their origin (overseas or domestic) or ethnic background (Article 4(3))
2. Providers must not apply higher fees for overseas patients (Article 4(4))

HOW TO FIND THE “PROVIDED INFORMATION“?

A living example:

After long research Erna Müller find on the webpage http://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/national-contact-points/germany/index_en.htm#health

The contact points, but if you click here the following happens:

10.4.5 404 Not Found

The server has not found anything matching the Request-URI. No indication is given of whether the condition is temporary or permanent.

CHALLENGE No.1

- How to find the right information?

CHALLENGE No.2

- How to find the right information?
- It is hard for a patient to find the national standards of safety and quality!

CHALLENGE No.3

- How to find the right information?
- It is hard for a patient to find national standards of safety and quality!
- It is even harder to find the standards of safety in another EU Member State – even if you speak the language!

CHALLENGE No.4

- How to find the right information?
- It is hard for a patient to find national standards of safety and quality!
- It is even harder to find the standards of safety in another EU Member State – especially if you speak not the foreign language!
- An effective mechanism for reporting of malpractices?

CHALLENGE No.5

- How to find the right information?
- It is hard for a patient to find national standards of safety and quality!
- It is even harder to find the standards of safety in another EU Member State – even if you speak the language!
- An effective mechanism for reporting of malpractices?
- It is nearly impossible for a patient to compare both „standards“!

CONTINUITY OF CARE

Article 5(c),(d)): “if a medical follow-up proves necessary after their return home, the home country must provide the same follow-up as for treatment received at home”

But what if the medication is not available or the guidelines are completely different in the home country?

WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG ?

It is recommended that patients contact the National Contact Point

But:

In real life no patient is able to find the way through the bureaucratic jungle...

CONCLUSION I.

- At that stage it is hard to get all needed information regarding the quality of care and patient safety.

  Solution: many more NGOs and public health institutions but also GPs and health insurances has to be trained in order to provide best information. Parallel the information should be much more easy to find via Internet.

CONCLUSION II.

- Different guidelines and different interpretations of guidelines make some medical help impossible.

  Solution: an easy to understand toolkit should be produce to explain all issues around safety and guidelines and makes the patient able to compare both issues.

CONCLUSION III.

- For most patients, the language barrier is the biggest obstacle!

  Solution: contact points should be able to refer to translators but also to culture translators.

Summary:

The cross boarder health directive is a very good initiative but at that stage it is like a child who just learn to walk.

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THANK
YOU!