



## 12 steps to tackle the burden of chronic diseases

*JA-CHRODIS Final Conference delivers 12 steps towards implementing practices to reduce the burden of chronic diseases*

Chronic diseases already account for 70% to 80% of healthcare budgets in Europe. They constitute a serious threat to health systems' sustainability if not tackled. Today, clear steps towards addressing the broad chronic disease challenges were presented to policymakers, researchers, and international organisations and NGOs at the JA-CHRODIS final conference. The proposals are the culmination of three years of international collaboration in the area of chronic diseases.

Ahead of his key note speech at the conference, Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, stated that *"More than half a million people of working age die prematurely from chronic diseases in the EU every year. This represents a huge cost for society and economy – EUR 115 billion in lost productivity and major health systems' expenditure. Of course, an even greater cost is that of pain and suffering for the family and friends. This is why I will never tire of speaking about health promotion, disease prevention and protection measures to keep people in good health, and for as long as possible. Participation of all relevant stakeholders is also key. JA-CHRODIS is an example of such participation, collaboration and cooperation. Through a range of concrete actions it has made an important contribution to address the challenges posed by chronic diseases and to make health systems more sustainable, efficient and resilient."*

Carlos Segovia, Coordinator of JA-CHRODIS, launched the '12 steps' document setting out recommended actions for scaling up, transfer, and implementation of practices in order to ultimately reduce the burden of chronic diseases. He explained, *"These 12 steps constitute a valuable and practical tool to inspire and guide healthcare professionals and policy makers in their work on the promotion of healthy ageing as well as prevention, management and care of chronic diseases. Thus, they serve a double purpose: firstly, it highlights our results after three years of hard work in one comprehensive, yet concise, statement; secondly, it showcases the possibilities that lie in exchanging good practices at European level to tackle the burden of chronic diseases."*

In various workshops, participants learned about the various outputs of the Joint Action, including the [CHRODIS Platform](#), the online repository of peer-reviewed good practices, the Policy Brief on National Diabetes Plans (NDPs), the multimorbidity care model, and transferability factors for good practices in health promotion and primary prevention.

The conference also heard about wider implications of the chronic disease challenge and how Member States and the EU can address them. Speakers including Vytenis Andriukaitis and WHO Europe's Regional Director Zsuzsanna Jakab, addressed how chronic diseases can be reduced and how policies can be of support. Panel discussions also focused on how to make health systems more sustainable, efficient and resilient by integrating health promotion in the wider systems, improving intersectoral work and promoting comprehensive approaches when caring for patients with chronic diseases.



Note to Editors:

1. The Joint Action on Chronic Diseases and Promoting Healthy Ageing across the Life Cycle (JA-CHRODIS) has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Health Programme (2008-2013). This European collaboration brings together over 73 [associated and collaborating partners](#) from e.g. national and regional departments of health, research institutions and other organisations from 23 EU Member States as well as Norway and Iceland. Please see: [www.chrodis.eu](http://www.chrodis.eu)
2. Chronic diseases account for 85 per cent of the disease burden and pose a great challenge on health systems. Especially, among elderly the chronic diseases are responsible for a loss of quality of life, reduced independence, and decreased functionality
3. All of JA-CHRODIS' outcomes are visualised here: <http://chrodis.eu/outcomes-results/>
4. The 12 steps can be accessed here: <http://chrodis.eu/our-work/02-communication/tools/>
5. More information about the final conference can be found here: <http://chrodis.eu/event/ja-chrodis-final-conference/>

For more information:

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Conference organisers: EuroHealthNet – Anne Pierson ([a.pierson@eurohealthnet.eu](mailto:a.pierson@eurohealthnet.eu))

Follow the conference hashtag on social media: #CHRODIS2017

*\* This press release arises from the Joint Action addressing chronic diseases and healthy ageing across the life cycle (JA-CHRODIS), which has received funding from the European Union, under the framework of the Health Programme (2008-2013).*