Cancon Joint Action calls for policy dialogue at National and EU level

Press Release
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The European-wide effort on cancer control will be the key object of a broad discussion, including cancer inequities, during the second Cancon policy conference in Rome, Italy, on September 16th 2016. This conference is organised as a joint initiative by the Italian Ministry of Health, the EU Joint Action on Comprehensive Cancer Control (Cancon), the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC), the Italian Cancer League (LILT) and the Italian Federation of Cancer Patients Organisation (FAVO). It will also take place back-to-back with the Conference promoted by MAC (the MEPs against Cancer group (MAC)), hosted by the Italian Ministry of Health, who is also the leader coordinating the Cancon Member States cooperation Platform.

The aim of both conferences is to generate a policy dialogue on how experts can collaborate from around Europe in an effort to decrease cancer inequities, namely in prevention policies, access to innovation, and access to rehabilitation programmes. The ultimate goal is to raise cancer survival and reduce cancer mortality by improving the quality of life of cancer patients and survivors all across Europe.

The structure of this year’s Cancon policy conference is twofold. It begins with a First session (National policy conference, bringing together key national figures from Italy and Europe, to discuss the links between the national and EU level aspects of cancer policy. This first session focuses on cancer prevention and access to innovation. Cancon has invited key decision makers, like MP Mario Marazziti, MEP Alojz Peterle and key representatives from the Cancon partners and the European Commission.

The link between the Cancon recommendations and the reality of cancer policymaking will be ensured by the presence of MEP Elisabetta Gardini, who has been very active within the European Parliament in the field of access to innovative cancer medicines, and Italian MPs Emiliagrazia De Biasi and Paola Binetti, both engaged in Italy on the side of cancer patients.

The second session focuses specifically on equity and rehabilitation. This session showcases the fundamental Cancon deliverables on these issues, and the ensuing recommendations, which ultimately aim to act as a reference point for the development of national cancer control plans. This session also includes presentation of distinguished speakers, leaders of specific Cancon actions, and the contribution of policy makers, such as MEP Davide Maria Sassoli and MP Laura Bianconi.
Following the Cancon strategical approach of stakeholder and cancer patients’ involvement, two key players of Cancer control in Europe will directly provide their perspectives during the conference:

a) the European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC, Europe’s largest cancer patients’ association) with Prof De Lorenzo and Kathi Apostolidis, who have been directly involved in drafting Cancon recommendations, will show Cancon ability to include the vision and needs of cancer patients. www.ecpc.org

b) the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), co-leader of Cancon dissemination initiatives, including the Cancon Policy Conference, will bring its multiannual experience in Prevention and Health promotion, with presentations by its President Sakari Karjalainen and by several speakers belonging to ECL’s Italian member, LILT. www.europeancancerleagues.org

**About Cancon**

Cancon aims at harmonising the way our healthcare systems fight cancer, by providing coherent recommendations to update the national cancer plans. These recommendations are based on the experience and best practices of the 17 EU countries involved in Cancon, and therefore do represent the best standards of organisation of cancer care in Europe.

The Cancon recommendations encompass several aspects of cancer care, from prevention and screening to survivorship, and will be collected into a European Guide on Quality Improvement in Comprehensive Cancer Control. The Guide is meant for governments, parliamentarians, health care providers and funders, and cancer care professionals at every level.

If implemented, the Cancon recommendations can have a practical, positive impact on overall cancer outcome, therefore raising cancer survival and reducing cancer mortality by improving the quality of cancer care among member states. www.cancercontrol.eu

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