

May 2017

For further information on any of these news items, please contact Paul Laffin: plaffin@bma.org.uk

- **Brexit Update**
 - **Digital Single Market Strategy Focuses on Health**
 - **EU Health Programme Funding Opportunities**
 - **Protecting Minors from the Marketing of Alcohol and Unhealthy Food & Drinks**
 - **EU Guides on Patient Blood Management**
-

Brexit update

As we near the beginning of the negotiations – expected to start on June 19 after the UK general election, the BMA continues to work to secure an outcome which threatens neither the medical profession nor the patients it serves.

To this end, BMA lobbying of the EU has resulted in the EC's (European Commission) working paper "Essential Principles on Citizens' Rights" further emphasising the prioritisation of key BMA objectives:

- *EU 27 citizens or UK nationals who resided legally respectively in the UK or EU27 at the date of entry into force of the Withdrawal Agreement should be considered legally resident even if they do not hold a residence document evidencing that right.*
- *The Withdrawal Agreement should ensure, in the UK and in EU27, the protection...of recognised professional qualifications (diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification) obtained in any of the EU28 Member States before that date.*

Recognising the ongoing necessity for key actors on both sides of the negotiating table to be aware of our concerns; chief officers, elected members and staff continue to meet with MPs, UK government officials, MEPs, EU officials and stakeholders from across Europe. For example, Dr Mark Porter, BMA council chair, met with the President of the Estonian Medical Association to outline the impact that Brexit will have on the European medical profession, ahead of Estonia's assumption (July/December 2017) of the Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The EC's working paper can be read via the first link with an overview of the BMA's extensive work in this area available via the second link:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/citizens-rights-essential-principles-draft-position-paper_en.pdf

<https://www.bma.org.uk/collective-voice/influence/europe/brexit>

Digital Single Market Strategy Focuses on Health

The EC's mid-term review, available via the link below, of its digital single market strategy and includes a number of new health related initiatives:

- new legislation on cybersecurity and the data economy - by September 2017, the EU's cybersecurity strategy and its cybersecurity agency, ENISA will be reviewed and new rules will be proposed for guaranteeing the free flow of non-personal data across EU borders.
- a renewed focus on e-health, working with member countries to facilitate the transfer of health records across borders and encourage the use of e-prescriptions.
- 3 initiatives on digital health by the end 2017 are planned: citizens' access to electronic health records; supporting the development of a secure data infrastructure; deployment of interactive digital solutions between patients and healthcare providers

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-17-1233_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-17-1233_en.htm)

EU Health Programme Funding Opportunities

The BMA's European office has summarised the 2017 funding opportunities available under the 3rd EU Health Programme - the main EU funding instrument to support and underpin the development and implementation of EU health policy via the following 4 objectives:

- Promoting health, preventing diseases and fostering supportive environments for healthy lifestyles taking into account the 'health in all policies' principle
- Protecting Union citizens from serious cross-border threats to health
- Contributing to innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems
- Facilitating access to better and safer healthcare for Union citizens

The BMA's funding brief can be accessed via the first link below with the health programme's 2017 work programme available via the second:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/events/adoption_workplan_2017_en

<https://www.bma.org.uk/collective-voice/influence/europe/european-funding-brief>

Protecting Minors from the Marketing of Alcohol and Unhealthy Food & Drinks

MEPs have adopted a controversial report on the revision of the EU's Directive on Audio-Visual Media Services. The report recommends that voluntary self and co-regulation by industry, with regard to the advertising of alcohol and food high in fat, sugar and salt is sufficient to tackle the rising levels of childhood obesity and the alarming levels of youth binge drinking that persist in Europe today.

As such views are antithetical to those of the BMA, we will be continuing to work with European partners to secure a more stringent approach in the revised Directive.

A copy of a letter, co-signed by the BMA and other public health advocates, sent to the national governments is available via the link below:

http://www.eurocare.org/library/updates/joint_open_letter_i_ministerial_action_needed_to_improve_avm_sd

EU Guides on Patient Blood Management

The EC has recently published two guides on PBM (Patient Blood Management), developed under the EU Public Health Programme, one for authorities and the other addressed to hospitals.

PBM is a patient-focused, evidence-based and systematic approach to improve patient outcomes through the safe and rational use of blood and blood products and avoiding unnecessary transfusions. The PBM

approach has been endorsed and promoted by the WHO (World Health Organisation) and is widely accepted as current best practice. The elements of PBM include:

- the prevention of conditions that might otherwise result in the need for transfusion (through health promotion and screening for early detection of anemia)
- appropriate diagnosis and optimal treatment, including the use of alternatives to transfusion
- good surgical and anaesthetic techniques
- the use of alternatives to blood transfusion and blood conservation

The documents are available via the following link:

https://ec.europa.eu/health/blood_tissues_organ/publications_en
