

# Press Release



## Poland failing, only 25<sup>th</sup> in European Patient Empowerment ranking

Brussels, 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2009

**Polish patients belong to the least empowered in Europe, according to the report "Empowerment of the European Patient - Options and Implications" published today in Brussels. In this ranking Denmark comes first followed by Germany and Finland.**

The top ranked countries are a good mix of Western and Central - Eastern European countries. The Report finds that in patient empowerment not only money matters – instead the issue is about will and the perception of whom the healthcare system really aims to serve! This means that Poland, with its refusal to give patients choice or the power to use financial initiatives, scores very poorly.

### **What needs to improve in Poland?**

Patients must be allowed to choose their healthcare provider in order to enable real partnerships – this is especially crucial in healthcare systems delivering mediocre quality! Further user information has to be the initial step towards patient empowerment. First there is an issue of fostering patient literacy – then other tools will be essential allowing patients to become participants in care.

Today's report shows that Polish patients need to access understandable information about the healthcare they require and the medicines they are using, from more sources than their doctor or pharmacist. This would ensure that patients can become truly active partners in healthcare – quite essential today to ensure good results in healthcare. A 24/7 healthcare information system on the web or via phone should be an obvious step towards a more patient friendly healthcare. With regards to medicines a look into the Swedish information site [www.fass.se](http://www.fass.se) might be a good start: here Swedish citizens can learn about their prescribed medicines. This system even provides rapid alerts via SMS or email if the authorities or medicines producers learn about problems previously unknown.

Once all this is achieved, we would like to see real empowerment via financial incentives and patients being allowed to act as partners, taking real responsibility for their care via co-payments and options among insurers.

The Patient ranking groups 18 indicators of empowerment into four categories: Patients' rights, Information, Health Technology Assessment (HTA) and Financial incentives. Each sub-discipline is weighted for importance to provide the overall score of max 1000 points.

### **The individual category leaders were as follows:**

Patients' rights: **Switzerland**

Information: **Denmark**

Health Technology Assessment (HTA): **Denmark** and the **UK**

Financial incentives: **Belgium, Germany** and **Switzerland**

The Report has been supported by an unrestricted grant from Novartis.

For more information, the Report and the Matrix: [www.healthpowerhouse.com](http://www.healthpowerhouse.com).

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