

Welcome speech ISCIII-Coordinator @ CHRODIS Conference “Joining forces in health promotion to tackle the burden of chronic diseases”

Vilnius November 24th 2015

Good morning Vice Minister Šalaševičiūtė, Director Sabaliauskas,
Mr. Huebel, CHRODIS partners, ladies and gentlemen.

It is not only a pleasure but a great honour for me to welcome you on behalf of the National Institute of Health Carlos III, as the responsible of coordinating the JA CHRODIS to this conference “Joining forces in health promotion to tackle the burden of chronic diseases”.

Allow me to express my gratitude to the Lithuanian Ministry of Health and the Center for Health Education and Disease Prevention (SMLPC) for hosting this important event and giving us the opportunity to reinforce our relations and learn from each other under a perfect atmosphere and beautiful environment.

I'd also like to express my gratitude to Thomas Kunkel from the German Federal Centre for Health Education and Anne Pierson and Ingrid Stegeman, from EuroHealthNet, for their leader and co- leadership in the organization of this conference; I am very much aware of the effort that both associated and collaborating partners have put not only to the logistics but to the concept of the different sessions. You are an example to follow of leadership, cooperative work and synergy building and in my opinion this is not only something to be proud of, but the way to move things forward in Europe.

I would also like to thank the European Commission's DG Sante, not only for the presence today of Mr. Huebel, but also for the continuous support and follow-up of our activities from the Officers, Mr. Wolfgang Philipp and Dr. Anne-Marie Yazbeck.

The JA-CHRODIS was launched almost two years ago with the important goal of promoting and facilitating a process of exchange and transfer of good practices across Europe, addressing chronic conditions and healthy ageing and focusing on health promotion and primary prevention as well as the management of diabetes and multi-morbidity conditions.

Today, JA-CHRODIS has identified good practices, plans, programmes and interventions on these three areas, is establishing tools and procedures for the assessment and exchange of good practices across Europe and is working on conducting associated case study visits, training activities and recommendations oriented not only to health care professionals and stakeholders, but also to policy makers.

The work within the JA is being developed in an effective and cooperative way, through a sharing and learning process between countries, regions, organizations and communities of professionals. In this regard, the outcomes that will be presented and discussed in this conference are a great example of this "Joining Forces" principle implicit in our JA, where partners have been working together and in collaboration with other work packages and initiatives in Europe. It is of good reason that we are gathering here approximately 107 attendees from 20 European countries.

One of the biggest challenges of the National Institute of Health Carlos III, which is the main Health Research Public Body in Spain and responsible of the coordination of the JA, is to ensure the use of research for a higher

efficiency of our resources and for our contribution on the definition of policies and decision making related to the Health Care System. JA-CHRODIS is an opportunity to accomplish this challenge. Moreover, JA-CHRODIS responds to a political demand of the EU to the exchange of good practices related to chronic diseases.

But none of this will be of use if patients and their families, social and health care professionals, health organizations and national health systems, policy makers from across Europe do not benefit from the efforts partners, health authorities and the EC are investing in terms of human and economic resources.

And that is why CHRODIS has to take the opportunity of adding value through its community of professionals bound together by shared expertise, committed to stimulate and facilitate the implementation of validated good practices to improve the quality of our health systems.

We hope that after this conference today we are able to reflect that with your involvement and expertise you contribute not only to the development and success of the Joint Action, but also to the potential of implementing the outcomes in our countries improving the wellbeing and health of citizens.

So let's share, learn and above all enjoy!

Thank you very much!