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I.1. OFICINA REGIONAL PARA EUROPA

What are the palliative care needs of older people and how might they be met?
Health Evidence Network (HEN)
August 2004
Regional Office for Europe,

Ethics of the Health Systems*
Report of the Third Futures Forum for High-level Decision-makers
Stockholm, Sweden, 27–28 June 2002
Regional Office for Europe

Declaración para la Promoción de los Derechos de los Pacientes en Europa
Consulta Europea sobre los Derechos de los Pacientes.
Amsterdam, 28-30 de marzo de 1994
Regional Office for Europe

Ethics of the Health Systems

Report of the Third Futures Forum for High-level Decision-makers
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ABSTRACT

The Third Futures Forum brought together decision-makers from 15 western European countries to share views on and experience with five aspects of the ethics of health care systems: patient information and consent, the limits of health care, health system development, intersectoral action for health and ways to strengthen the ethics of health systems in general. Invited contributions and group discussion showed that countries shared similar problems but varied widely in responses to ethical issues, owing partly to differences in size, culture (including religion) and the nature of health care systems. The participants agreed, however, that debates on health systems should take account of ethical considerations and that equality of access to care was an ethically driven principle of any system. The participants received an update on progress on health cooperation in the face of terrorism, which had been the topic of the Second Futures Forum six months previously. Six topics were added to the list of subjects that other fora could consider, and the need for these meetings to tread a difficult path between structure and informality was emphasized.

[…]

Introduction

In 1663 two Swedish physicians set up a body, independent of the state, to tackle an ethical issue – namely, the exposure of charlatans, people who falsely claimed to offer cures but who lacked proper qualifications. In June 2002, that same organization, today called the National Board of Health and Welfare, hosted at its Stockholm offices a meeting on ethics in European health systems. This was the WHO Regional Office for Europe's Third Futures Forum for High level Decision-makers.

In Europe today health-policy decisions are often made under pressure of time, and the ethical impact of a policy may not get the consideration it deserves. Participants tackled five large topics that had been selected, with some difficulty, on the basis of feedback from decision-makers in the member states and expressions of a willingness to contribute. The focus was health-care systems and sharing experience of the ethical aspects of policy-making; bioethical topics such as gene technology were excluded because these are currently under scrutiny by other European institutions. There was plenty of sharing and the WHO Regional Office will seek to incorporate the participants' deliberations into the 2005 renewal of WHO «Health for All» policy for the European Region.

Ethics of patient information and consent

This session focused on patient information and consent. The legally enforceable and specific principle of «informed

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* Las normas que aparecen en negrita se reproducen parcial o íntegramente.