

Press Release



Irish healthcare system witnesses improvement in European health consumer ranking

Brussels, 15th December 2008

Ireland has the 11th most consumer friendly healthcare system in Europe, according to the 2008 Euro Health Consumer Index (EHCI) launched today in Brussels. This is an improvement from last year's 16th position that places Ireland on a longer and firm improvement trend.

The Euro Health Consumer Index, an annual survey of EU healthcare, ranked the Irish healthcare system as 11th out of 31. The Netherlands lead the ranking with a score of 839 points, followed by Denmark (Diabetes Index winner in 2008), Austria (EHCI winner in 2007), Luxemburg and Sweden.

In six categories, covering 34 performance indicators, Ireland scores 671 points out of a potential 1,000. The Irish performance was at the same level for the Heart Index 2008 and even better for the Diabetes one.

"We can notice some improvements with regards to accessibility and outcomes, which are considered the most vital areas of the index," comments Dr. Arne Björnberg, Research Director for the Euro Health Consumer Index.

What more could be done in Ireland?

"First and foremost, the Irish should cut the waiting times, particularly for specialist appointments; further work on consumer empowerment by introducing a patient rights law would be next. But Ireland should also make the most of the new possibilities that e-Health offers in order to increase safety and efficiency" says the president of the Health Consumer Powerhouse, Mr. Johan Hjertqvist, when analysing the Index outcomes for Ireland.

About the Index

The Euro Health Consumer Index is the annual ranking of national European healthcare systems across six key areas: Patient rights and information, e-Health, Waiting time for treatment, Outcomes, Range and reach of services provided and Pharmaceuticals. 31 countries are covered. First published in 2005, the EHCI is sourced from public statistics and independent research. The producer is the analysis and information organisation Health Consumer Powerhouse. As with all other HCP Indexes, the organisation takes a consumer-centred position.

For more information and the explanatory report:

http://www.healthpowerhouse.com/archives/cat_media_room.html

About the Health Consumer Powerhouse: www.healthpowerhouse.com

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