The European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

CPME Response to the Call for Evidence on Digital Education – Enabling Factors for Success

CPME welcomes the opportunity to respond to the call for evidence on the Commission's initiative for a "Proposal for a Council Recommendation on digital education". The initiative is part of the Digital Education Action Plan (2021/2027) and intends to improve the provision of digital education, covering all levels of education and training. The objective is to support Member States in developing a digital education strategy, tackling identified challenges such as uneven school connectivity, shortage or inadequacy of digital equipment for teaching, problems with interoperability across platforms and services, access to high quality digital education content, socioeconomically disadvantaged learners, insufficient attention paid to accessible and assistive digital technologies for people with disabilities.

Although the call is not directly aimed at the healthcare sector, CPME believes it is necessary to highlight key points from the CPME policies on digital competencies for doctors[1], on interoperability[2] and on telemedicine[3] that are relevant to developing a robust policy on digital education :

1. Academics, professionals, and policymakers should work together to identify the competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and ethics) needed. These new skills should be reflected in the future curricula of faculties and integrated into continuous professional development (CPD).

2. For those already in the labour market, courses should be hands-on, taking place during working time to facilitate implementation, and benefit from new online methods for learning. Organisational encouragement and financial support for innovation are here vital.

3. Digital education programmes should be systematically monitored and regularly assessed on their implementation and effectiveness, as they are continuously updated. Their impact should be examined by independent bodies to ensure they are fit for purpose.

[1] CPME Policy on Digital Competencies for Doctors, November 2020, <https://www.cpme.eu/api/documents/adopted/2020/11/CPME_AD_Board_21112020_100.FINAL_.CPME_.Policy.Digital.Competencies.for_.Doctors.pdf>.
[2] CPME Statement on Shaping the Healthcare Sector Interoperability Policy, April 2021, < www.cpme.eu/api/documents/adopted/2021/8/CPME_AD_EC_08042021_024_FINAL.CPME_.Statement.Shaping.Healthcare.Sector.Interoperability.pdf>
[3] CPME Policy on Telemedicine, March 2021, <https://www.cpme.eu/api/documents/adopted/2021/3/CPME_AD_Board_20032021_012.FINAL_.CPME_.Policy.on_.Telemedicine.pdf>.

STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS - CPME AISBL | 15 RUE GUIMARD – 1040 BRUSSELS - BELGIUM
RPM: 0462509658 | TRANSPARENCY REGISTER NUMBER: 9276943405-41 | JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OF ETTERBEEK - BRUSSELS' CANTON OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

4. Interdisciplinary and interprofessional collaboration should be considered, when developing a core curriculum for digital competences.

5. Equitable access to the benefits of digital education should be supported with government's investment in broadband infrastructure and digital literacy programmes.

6. Digital education should not contribute to the digital divide. It should be used as a complement where it is efficient to improve the quality of education. Face-to-face teacher-student interaction should remain the gold-standard.

7. Risks can arise as more students' data are collected, exchanged, stored, and consequently profiled by systems. Security by design, privacy by design, professional secrecy and ethics must be considered as fundamental principles of digital education and of an interoperability policy in the educational sector.

8. The design of technical systems in educational settings must be driven by the needs of the educational system itself and teachers, and not by the needs of the industry.

9. The use of digital education should not be influenced by commercial factors nor used as a cost-saving measure to justify the closure of school facilities especially in less populated areas.

***

STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS - CPME AISBL | 15 RUE GUIMARD – 1040 BRUSSELS - BELGIUM
RPM: 0462509658 | TRANSPARENCY REGISTER NUMBER: 9276943405-41 | JUSTICE OF THE PEACE OF ETTERBEEK - BRUSSELS' CANTON OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE