

III. Assessment – research – training

- The institution of techniques of evaluation of dependency is of fundamental importance.
- Member states must promote research in chronic diseases and the causes of disability in elderly persons, in particular in the senile dementias.
- The care of an elderly person at home or in an institution, calls for a specific training in geriatrics, both basic and continuing, for general practitioners, as well as for specialists.

IV. Organisation of medical care

- In all member states, the policy trends are towards maintaining elderly people at home where the family doctor in his role, as the personal confidential advisor of his patients, is the co-ordinator of medical care.
- With a view to an improved response to the needs of elderly persons, co-ordination of social and health care is an absolute necessity.
- To this end, there must be co-ordination between the doctor and:
 - The Family and neighbours (as a priority).
 - The nursing and other health professions.
 - Social workers.
 - Other organisations and services for the elderly.
- Maintaining the elderly person at home appears to be the most economic approach for society and the most humane for the individual. It calls for an adequate training of the general practitioner in evaluation techniques, palliative care of elderly persons, and terminal care. It requires involvement in and development of new techniques for care of the elderly at home by specialists.
- When there is a need for special accommodation of the elderly person due to psychological, physical, family or social factors, this calls for a type of accommodation which is a real substitute for the home, geared to human needs, with a stimulating style of life, leisure and occupational activities.
- Day hospitals and hospitalisation for the night or the week-end must avoid the psychological trauma of hospitalisation in an elderly person.
- Temporary accommodation is a valuable alternative to hospitalisation and gives a change for families to have a rest.
- The hospitalisation of an elderly person should only be used as a last resort.

Aware of the importance of the demographic trends in aging and its effects on the future of Europe, the Standing Committee of Doctors of the EEC, on the basis of these recommendations, proposes to the European institutions and to competent authorities in every member state that they should willingly engage in a policy of support for the elderly population.

5.3 Recommendations of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CP) to national medical associations on health and the environment

(CP 94/88 Final)

Submitted by the subcommittee on preventive medicine and the environment.

Adopted at the Plenary Assembly, Lisbon 25-26 November 1994.

Considering the prevalence of environmental problems in the European area.

Considering the pre-eminent role of the European medical profession in the fields of prevention, counselling and treatment.

Considering Article 129a on Public Health and Article 130r on the Environment of the Treaty of Maastricht.

Considering the awareness of governments on environmental issues as expressed in the UN-conference Rio de Janeiro June 1992.

Considering the WHO-Charter on Environment and Health and the 2nd European Conference on Environment and Health, Helsinki, June 1994.

Considering the Resolution of the European Parliament, April 1994.

Considering the Report of its Subcommittee on Preventive Medicine and the Environment, Espinho, Portugal, 24 September 1994.

The Plenary Assembly of the Standing Committee of European Doctors held in Lisbon on 25 November 1994.

- States that pollution of the environment, whatever form it takes, is a threat for health.
- Deems it is especially the duty of the European medical profession to draw the attention of the public and to alert the responsible authorities to the hazards and the harmful consequences for health due to pollution of the environment.
- Reaffirms the role of the medical profession in this field.

Doctors and all health professionals have a pivotal role to play in dealing with the problems of health and environment, facing an increase in the incidence of environment related diseases.

General practitioners and specialists in ambulatory care are the first to be confronted with health problems of their patients, it is their patients relating to the environment. Besides treating and counselling their responsibility to analyse the health problem in order to detect at possible environmental origin. Furthermore they should transmit the information to the appropriate authorities and/or the public in full accordance with the needs of medical confidentiality and national legislation.

In addition the standing Committee recalls that preventive medicine is a fundamental part of daily medical activity.

To be able to carry out these tasks physicians need a basic understanding of environmental health which has to be included in their basic training. For the clinical application environmental health also has to be included in post-graduate education.

Specialists of environmental health are active in research, environmental protection, planning and counselling to the government and the public. In relevant authorities and research institutions, medical experts for environmental health should have a key role on decisions, to ensure the high level of health protection as guaranteed by Articles 129a and 130r of the Maastricht Treaty.

To achieve the necessary level of knowledge a specialist post-graduate medical education should be recognised.

The Standing Committee of European Doctors requests its National Member Associations to:

- Acknowledge the essential role of the medical profession on Health and environment by:
 - * encouraging their members to get involved in environmental health issues,
 - * offering post-graduate medical education on environmental health,
 - * seeking cooperation with national and international physicians' organisations working in the field of environmental health,
 - * contacting the national governments in order to get support for the acknowledgement of the Standing Committee of European Doctors as a competent international body.

5.4 Recommendations of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CP) to the European Commission on health and the environment

(CP 94/89 Final)

Considering the prevalence of environmental problems in the European area.

Considering the pre-eminent role of the European medical profession in the fields of prevention, counselling and treatment.

Considering Article 129a on Public Health and Article 130r on the Environment of the Treaty of Maastricht.

Considering the awareness of governments on environmental issues as expressed in the UN-conference Rio de Janeiro June 1992.

Considering the WHO-Charter on Environment and Health and the 2nd European Conference on Environment and Health, Helsinki, June 1994.

Considering the Resolution of the European Parliament, april 1994.

Considering the Report of its Subcommittee on Preventive Medicine and the Environment, Espinho, Portugal, 24 September 1994.

The Plenary Assembly of the Standing Committee of European Doctors held in Lisbon on 25 November 1994.

- States that pollution of the environment, whatever form it takes, is a threat for health.
- Deems it is especially the duty of the European medical profession to draw the attention of the public and to alert the responsible authorities to the hazards and the harmful consequences for health due to pollution of the environment.
- Reaffirms the role of the medical profession in this field.

Doctors and all health professionals have a pivotal role to play in dealing with the problems of health and environment, facing an increase in the incidence of environment related diseases.

General practitioners and specialists in ambulatory care are the first to be confronted with health problems of their patients, it is their patients relating to the environment. Besides treating and counselling their responsibility to analyse the health problem in order to detect at possible environmental origin. Furthermore they should transmit the information to the appropriate authorities and/or the public in full accordance with the needs of medical confidentiality and national legislation.

In addition the standing Committee recalls that preventive medicine is a fundamental part of daily medical activity.

To be able to carry out these tasks physicians need a basic understanding of environmental health which has to be included in their basic training. For the clinical application environmental health also has to be included in post-graduate education.

Specialists of environmental health are active in research, environmental protection, planning and counselling to the government and the public. In relevant authorities and research institutions, medical experts for environmental health should have a key role on decisions, to ensure the high level of health protection as guaranteed by Articles 129a and 130r of the Maastricht Treaty.

To achieve the necessary level of knowledge a specialist post-graduate medical education should be recognised.

- Acknowledge the essential role of the medical profession on Health and environment by:
 - accepting the Standing Committee of European Doctors as a competent international organisation in accordance with article 130r 1 (ii) and 5 of the Maastricht Treaty.