



At the CPME Board Meeting in Brussels on 14 June 2008, CPME adopted the following document “**Access to health care for undocumented migrants: a CPME position paper**” (referring to CPME 2008/109 EN/Fr)

**Access to health care for undocumented migrants:
a CPME¹ position paper**

Acknowledging that the health of migrants is an important public health matter and countries have a need to formulate and implement strategies for improving their health.

Underlining that migration may require humanitarian responses:

CPME calls upon National Medical Associations to engage in the necessary activities at the national level to ensure that:

- in their country doctors and health institutions are free to provide services to undocumented migrants; this implies e.g. that they will question any obligation to denounce undocumented migrants to (immigration) authorities and/or will question any (attempt to) criminalization of providing health care services to undocumented migrants
- restrictions as to the type and/or extent of health care undocumented migrants can receive are lifted; e.g. limitation of entitlements to emergency care can adversely affect both the health of undocumented immigrants and/or public health and therefore is not a viable option; it should be left to doctors to determine what in a given situation is the ‘necessary care’ that should be provided to the undocumented migrant; doctors and care institutions should draw up agreements and procedures so that the working method in case of undocumented migrants is transparent and can be tested by all those involved
- financial and organizational impediments for doctors and health institutions to provide health care to undocumented migrants are taken away; some government funding will probably be necessary in order to take away financial impediments (e.g. in the Netherlands the government has taken on such a financial responsibility)

¹ *The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) is the representative body of about 2 million physicians in Europe.*

Its aims are a) to promote the highest standards of medical training and medical practice, through advocating public health, the relationship between patients and doctors and the free movement of doctors and patients within the European Union and b) to achieve the highest quality of health care in Europe.

It is composed of the most representative non-governmental national medical organisations in EU/EEA countries, that is to say 30 National Medical Associations. It also unites associated members, observers and associated organisations (specialised European medical organisations).

- both doctors and undocumented migrants are fully aware of (and informed of) all existing possibilities to provide necessary health care; this implies using all formal and informal ways of providing the necessary information to undocumented migrants e.g. by involving NGO's (providing easily accessible information in relevant languages, including availability of mediators where appropriate)
- the health situation in groups of undocumented migrants and their problems in access to health care are adequately monitored and addressed.