

DECLARATION ON WORLD CANCER DAY

“European Cancer Patient’s Bill of Rights – One year on”

The rights of cancer patients transcend economic crisis, political change and scientific research. The [European Cancer Patient’s Bill of Rights](#) states the undeniable rights of cancer patients and was launched on the World Cancer Day 2014 by the European Cancer Concord and [European Cancer Patient Coalition – ECPC](#). The Bill of Rights was produced with the support of a large portion of the European cancer community and was endorsed by the former Health Commissioner Borg as well as many Members of the European Parliament.

One year later, on the [World Cancer Day 2015](#), we wish to reinforce the collaboration to show the world that we are united in this fight. We cannot and we will not disappoint patients’ expectations, we must turn words into actions.

We strongly believe that the implementation of the principles of Bill of Rights would ensure the dramatic improvement in cancer care that European cancer patients deserve and need. For this reason we identified **four priority pillars for action** that we will support within the European Parliament and the European Commission:

- **The thorough implementation of the Cross Border Healthcare Directive.** This Directive has a tremendous impact on the patients’ capacity to seek state of the art cancer care abroad, hence fulfilling their needs and rights. The launch of the [European Reference Networks](#) represents a step in the right direction, particularly to protect the rights of rare disease patients. This will be further strengthened by the Commission’s announced plan to establish an Action on Rare Diseases in 2015. However, **more has to be done at the national level to ensure true freedom of movement for all cancer patients** as established in the Directive;
- **Guarantee access to cancer care.** In many Member States, cancer patients do not have access to essential cancer treatments;
- **Ensuring access to innovative and possibly life-saving treatments.** Assessment of new drugs and treatments should take into consideration the improvement of patients’ outcome and their quality of life. Assessment of new drugs and treatments shall be made not only on a cost-effectiveness base, but also by embedding patients’ direct participation into the assessment process. **We strongly encourage the European Commission to overcome national obstacles related assessment and reimbursement through a solid European legislative initiative;**
- **Follow the European Commission’s example,** through the creation of formal tables of discussion with national cancer patients’ organisations, hence involving patients in the design of new national policies on cancer and research projects in the Member States.

We call on fellow Members of the European Parliament and on the European Commissioner for Health to commit to implement the European Cancer Patient’s Bill of Rights and to fight against Cancer.

TOGETHER WE WIN