



GE Healthcare

## PRESS RELEASE

# Survey of Senior European Healthcare Policy Makers reveals widespread support for increased investment in Early Health

*Respondents say balance between Early Health measures – prevention, screening, early diagnosis – and treatment is not optimal.*

**Berlin, September 12, 2007** - A new survey of senior healthcare policy makers and advisors across the European Union, announced today at GE Healthcare's media summit in Berlin, shows widespread support for an increase in Early Health initiatives such as prevention, screening and early diagnosis, but not at the expense of current healthcare budgets allocated for treatment.

The qualitative research carried out in August 2007 by Total Healthcare Solutions on behalf of GE Healthcare provides a snapshot view of current opinions of 15 healthcare policy makers and advisors across the European Union, including new accession countries (Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Latvia), and identifies the investment opportunities and challenges for Early Health.

The findings indicate a general consensus that Early Health initiatives should increase as part of a long-term plan to reduce the cost burden of treating disease in an ageing population, and reduce suffering from chronic disease. However, respondents identified a range of barriers and challenges that limit the willingness of governments to invest in Early Health programmes.

Current primary challenges to changing the imbalance include:

- the need for greater evidence of the economic and social impact of Early Health programmes;
- competing public budgets and competition within the total healthcare budget;
- short political mandates making long term targets in Early Health politically less attractive.

"We commissioned this survey to obtain a snapshot of the latest health policy thinking across Europe and to help drive the necessary discussion and debate to implement Early Health initiatives" said Lisa Kennedy, Head of Healthcare Economics, GE Healthcare.

"It is encouraging to hear so many health policy makers support the concept that Early Health should be seen as an investment to achieve long-term health and socio-economic benefits and not just as a cost. The research has also been instrumental in identifying some significant challenges ahead, and opens the debate as to how to overcome them in order to improve the health of all Europeans," she added.

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## Editors' Notes

### Survey Methodology

This explorative and qualitative research aiming to identify critical issues was conducted in August 2007 for GE Healthcare by THS Solutions, a management consultancy specialising in European healthcare policy research. THS conducted in-depth, 1:1 qualitative interviews with high ranking policy decision-makers and their advisers.

### Survey Participants

**Professor Pierre Durieux**, Associate professor of public health at the school of medicine René Descartes, Paris, **France**

**Professor Lorenzo Mantovani**, Professor of health economics University of Naples, **Italy**

**Professor Donato Greco**, Chief of the Department of Prevention and Communication of the Ministry of Health, Chief of the Centre for Prevention and Control of Diseases (CCM), **Italy**

**Antonio Sarria**, Director of the Spanish Agency for Health Technology Assessment (AETS) and Associate Professor of the Department of Health Sciences and Social Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Alcalá, **Spain**.

**Professor David Hunter**, Professor of Healthcare policy at Durham University and adviser to the Department of Health. Chair of the UK Public Health Association, **United Kingdom**.

**Jacques Henkinbrant**, Director Prevention and AIDS in the Directorate for Health (French Community), **Belgium**.

**Prof. J.A. Knottnerus**, President of the Health Council of the Netherlands (The Hague) Editor Journal of Clinical Epidemiology (Maastricht). Professor: Department of General Practice (UM) (Maastricht), **Netherlands**.

**Professor Rafal Nizankowski**, Former Deputy Minister of health. Previously CEO and President of the Accreditation Council. Head of National Center for Quality Assessment in Health Care, Krakow, **Poland**

**Dr Magdalena Wladysiuk**, Senior member of Polish HTA organization, **Poland**

**Dr Ales Bourek**, Head of University Center for Healthcare Quality Masaryk University, Brno and advisor for Ministry of Health on standards and quality assurance in health care, **Czech Republic**

**Dr Lajos Döbrössi**, Senior adviser to the Chief Medical Officer in public health. Expert in development of screening and early treatment programs, **Hungary**.

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**Dr Vesna-Kerstin Petric**, Under Secretary, Head of Sector for Health Promotion and Healthy Life Styles.  
Ministry of Health, **Slovenia**

**Rinalds Mucins**, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Health of the Republic of **Latvia**

**Vice President** of a major German Health Insurance Fund, **Germany**

**Sophia Schlette**, senior healthcare policy advisor Bertelsmann Institute, **Germany**

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GE Healthcare's broad range of products and services enables healthcare providers to better diagnose and treat cancer, heart disease, neurological diseases and other conditions earlier. Our vision for the future is to enable a new "early health" model of care focused on earlier diagnosis, pre-symptomatic disease detection and disease prevention. Headquartered in the United Kingdom, GE Healthcare is a \$17 billion unit of General Electric Company (NYSE: GE). Worldwide, GE Healthcare employs more than 46,000 people committed to serving healthcare professionals and their patients in more than 100 countries. For more information about GE Healthcare, visit our website at [www.gehealthcare.com](http://www.gehealthcare.com).

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