



## The Brussels Sepsis Resolution

### **Sepsis – The Most Preventable Cause of Death and Disability in Europe A Call for Action Across Europe to Decrease the Burden of Sepsis in Europe**

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the body's response to infection injures its own tissues and organs.

Sepsis does not discriminate against age, gender, religion, or geographic border. Each year in Europe, more than 3.4 million individuals develop sepsis. 700,000 do not survive, and an additional one-third of survivors die during the following year. Many survivors face lifelong consequences, such as new physical, psychological, and cognitive problems.

In May 2017, the World Health Assembly (WHA), the World Health Organization's decision-making body, [adopted a resolution on improving the prevention, diagnosis, and management of sepsis.](#)

Sepsis may be prevented by reducing infections, including through vaccination, by early recognition involving strategies to heighten public awareness, and by ensuring that health professionals and systems are equipped to treat sepsis as an emergency. However, as of today, only very few European countries have followed the call of the WHO Resolution on Sepsis to develop national Action Plans for improving the prevention, early recognition, and management of sepsis in both adults and children. As a result, this presents a leadership opportunity for the European Commission to work with the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament to support the development of consistent national sepsis Action Plans across the Europe.

To further this, on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018, over 40 European member organizations gathered under the auspices of the Global Sepsis Alliance, convened under the patronage of Vytenis Andriukaitis, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, to launch the European Sepsis Alliance (ESA). On that occasion, Commissioner Andriukaitis declared: „The time to act on sepsis is now. I encourage EU Member States to strengthen efforts to prevent infections that can lead to sepsis and thus save lives. “

The participants, among them sepsis survivors and their family members, policy makers, representatives from medical professional societies, healthcare authorities, civil society, consumer groups, healthcare providers, and industry, supported this resolution:

**Recalling** that the WHO Resolution on Sepsis passed in May 2017 recognizing sepsis as a global health priority;



**Highlighting** that the WHO Resolution on Sepsis directly impacts the attainment of UN Sustainable Development Goal 3 (i.e., “to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”)

**Recognizing** that despite the significant burden of sepsis, in most European countries far less than 50% of citizens know the word ‘sepsis’; and that knowledge around, systems design and resource allocated for, and the outcomes from sepsis in Europe vary widely.

**Stressing** that the quality of sepsis care is a key indicator of overall performance for health systems regarding that 80% of cases of sepsis develop outside the hospital, a fact which is not taken into account appropriately by the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC) and most national Centers of Disease Control and Prevention;

**Emphasizing** the inherent links between infection control/prevention (ICP), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and sepsis;

**Underlining** that any comprehensive infection management strategies on the facility, national or international level must incorporate these three pillars: infection prevention and control, sepsis and the appropriate use of antimicrobials;

And urge the European Commission, Council of Ministers and the European Parliament:

- To endorse the WHO Resolution on Sepsis and to encourage all European countries accordingly to develop national Action Plans and strategies to improve prevention, recognition, management, and rehabilitation of sepsis;
- To support a comprehensive Pan-European infection management strategy with sepsis as a key element
- To promote awareness on sepsis by organizing an European Sepsis Week around World Sepsis Day (September 13<sup>th</sup>)
- To encourage and support the European Center for Disease Control (ECDC) to engage in sepsis education for citizens and healthcare professionals following the shining example of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the US and similar initiatives in the UK and elsewhere,
- To consider the inherent links between AMR, ICP and sepsis in the new resolution of the EU Parliament to tackle antimicrobial resistance;
- To expand existing EU research programs on Infection control and AMR to better understand the human, medical, and economic burden of sepsis for Europe and to support the development of innovations to shorten and improve the diagnosis and management of sepsis and reduce the burden of its sequelae for survivors

Brussels, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018