



*Nothing About Us, Without Us!*

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Nr. 3/2005**

## **ECPC CALLS FOR AN END TO CANCER INEQUALITIES ACROSS THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 20.10.2005**

Thousands of EU citizens are dying every year of cancer because of inequalities in health care across member countries. Speaking of his shock at the extent of inequalities at the European Health Forum in Bad Gastein on 7 October 2005, Commissioner Kyprianou, in charge of Health and Consumer Protection at the Commission, called for greater coordination on health issues to bridge the health gaps across the EU of 25 Member States.

"When I became European Health Commissioner I was genuinely **surprised by the extent of inequalities** in health status and incidence of diseases that span our continent. This is a major challenge for us all. Can we really accept:

That male life expectancy in Estonia and Latvia is a full 12 years shorter than in nearby Sweden?

That heart disease kills almost ten times more women in the Slovak Republic than in France?

Or that lung cancer kills twice as many people in Hungary than in Finland?

Do we really want a European Union that sees these differences as reasonable, or even inevitable? "

The answer from the European Cancer Patient Coalition and its 160 members from across the European Union is a **resounding NO**.

ECPC thanks Commissioner Kyprianou for highlighting these shocking inequalities which are unacceptable in our European family of 25 Member States. ECPC will be working together with its member organizations, policy makers and politicians, health professionals and other interested and committed parties to bring about change. "Together we will be campaigning for equal access to quality cancer screening programmes, early diagnosis, best quality treatment and care for cancer patients living in the EU Member States," says Lynn Faulds Wood, President of ECPC who survived advanced colon cancer. "It is shocking for me to think that someone with my cancer will have a worse chance of survival only because he or she is living in another country in Europe."

Commissioner Kyprianou speech is available at

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/05/584&type=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

## **About ECPC**

The European Cancer Patient Coalition, launched in September 2003, is an European umbrella organization for cancer patient organisations from the 25 Member States. To date it has over 160 national members, representing the common cancers colorectal, lung, breast, prostate and many rarer cancers. It has been established to represent the views of cancer patients in the European healthcare debate and to provide a forum for European cancer patients to exchange information and share best practices. With its slogan: "Nothing About Us, Without Us", ECPC aims to be the voice of European cancer patients.

<http://www.ecpc-online.org>

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