

World Heart Day: Politicians, patients and doctors unite to demand action by governments on heart failure (HF)

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A new cross-sectoral alliance, the Heart Failure Policy Network, has issued a 'wake up call' for governments across Europe in the form of a ten-point Call to Action on HF, to support, go to: www.hfpolicynetwork.eu.

World Heart Day, Sept 2015: members and key supporters of the HF Policy Network launch a new Call to Action on HF in the European Parliament, Brussels.

Today, HF affects 15 million people across Europe, with 1 in 5 of us at risk of developing HF in our lifetime. HF is one of the few cardiovascular conditions where prevalence is rising, potentially by as much as 25% by 2030.

Yet despite its strategic significance and high cost to society, HF remains a forgotten condition by policy makers – and is largely unknown by the general public. Few countries feature HF in their cardiovascular health strategies. “Patient outcomes in HF are worse than those for most common forms of cancer” said Dr. José Ramón Juanatey, member of the Heart Failure Policy Network and President of the Spanish Society of Cardiology, “and heart failure is not on healthcare professionals’ radars.”

HF is often considered to be a lost cause, when in fact much can be done to save lives and improve the quality of life of those affected. Many patients do not receive appropriate diagnosis and care, leading to avoidable patient suffering and expensive hospital admissions.

To challenge this, the HF Policy Network has launched a Call to Action on HF, demanding governments deliver on ten key priorities to help prevent, diagnose, and manage the condition more effectively. The Network has also published a supporting HF Policy Toolkit, an invaluable resource for politicians interested in making a difference to people living with HF. “We have one opportunity to get this right. If we don’t, a tsunami of costs will hit us,” said Nick Hartshorne-Evans, CEO of the patient organisation, the Pumping Marvelous Foundation. “There can be no way back. We are inviting people from all over Europe to sign the Call to Action, and to help focus governments on this critical issue.”

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