

Beating Cancer takes a collective effort with prevention as the most effective yet undervalued option

AESGP reply to European Commission's European Beating Cancer Plan

AESGP congratulates the European Commission for the focus given on Cancer and on the newly released European Beating Cancer Plan, amidst the adversities of a long-lasting healthcare crisis.

AESGP would like to highlight the importance of the additions to the Beating Cancer Plan in accordance to AESGP's contributions to the roadmap¹:

Investment on cancer prevention

According to the released plan: *With 40% of cancer cases attributed to preventable causes, there is immense opportunity to reduce suffering caused by cancer in the EU.* There is ample room for the European Commission to support Member States in effective ways of investing in healthcare targeting prevention as the most cost-effective long-term cancer control strategy. This will certainly have a ripple effect and impact prevalence of other non-communicable diseases.

Improving health literacy and patient empowerment

AESGP praises the announced project on "Health Literacy for Cancer Prevention and Care" to share best practices. Good health literacy skills will allow individuals to interpret given information on health and disease, to select and find trustworthy sources of health information.

Moreover, health literacy empowers people to manage their disease, common symptoms and side effects of oncological therapy, and, for better healthcare outcomes, to decide when to practice self-care or seek professional care.

Enhancing healthy lifestyles and reducing risk behaviours

The self-care industry is committed to provide effective, quality and safe products that will help people in the healthcare continuum. Long-established and innovative self-care solutions are available, aiming at preventing shortcomings of diets and providing balanced nutrient range, protecting from environmental risk factors, modifying risk behaviours (e.g. tobacco cessation products), managing symptoms associated to cancer or to side effects of oncological therapy, and to delay or impede disease recurrence.

¹ <https://aesgp.eu/articles/aesgp-replies-to-european-commissions-roadmap-on-beating-cancer-plan>

AESGP also commends the European Commission on the holistic approach to the oncological patient, following the disease and its multi morbidities, as well as considering cancer a high-relapsing risk disease. AESGP would stress, nevertheless, the importance of considering secondary and tertiary prevention tools that can minimize the impacts and consequences of cancer.

AESGP values the Plan's relevance given to the use of digital tools and data for better understanding and follow-up and for encompassing these essential technological developments in healthcare.

AESGP still believes that further research is needed in the area of food supplements and non-prescription medicines, as essential tools in prevention and in combination with oncological treatments, that might achieve higher efficacy, better therapeutical adherence and better healthcare outcomes.

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