



Health ministers from the Baltic countries and international experts meet in Estonia to discuss health systems governance

**Note for the press
Tallinn, 29 August 2007**

On 29 and 30 August, ministers of health and senior decision-makers from the Baltic countries, together with international experts, will meet in Pärnu, Estonia. They will look into how governance can enhance access to and the efficiency and quality of health care, how to maintain financial sustainability in health systems, and how to ensure accountability in this sector from the political, financial and performance perspectives.

Representatives of ministries, health financing agencies, hospitals, professional associations and academic institutions in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will participate in the meeting to share their experience and practical examples with other countries. Health insurance and hospital governance will be among the main topics on the agenda.

“We can say that the Estonian health system is successful. Key to success in our health care is our successful economic reforms – our changes have been complex, and hospitals and health insurance fund have developed together. The representatives of the three Baltic countries can change minds and learn from each other’s experiences at our meeting in Pärnu,” says Maret Maripuu, Estonian Minister of Social Affairs.

“Baltic countries have good experience in sharing roles and responsibilities among the key players in health systems. To improve performance and accountability in health systems, they have developed and carried out various mechanisms that could be of benefit to other Member States,” says Dr Nata Menabde, Deputy Regional Director for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The meeting is part of preparations for the forthcoming WHO Ministerial Conference “Health Systems, Health and Wealth”, which will take place in Tallinn in June 2008, and where issues such as health sector governance will be discussed by delegations from 53 WHO European Member States.

The meeting is being organized by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies. It will take place at the Strand Hotel, Pärnu. Journalists are invited to the press briefing and individual interviews with keynote speakers, organized by the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs and the Regional Office, on Wednesday 29 August at 12:30–14:00 and 15:30–16:00 at the Strand Hotel.

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