

# Decentralized Cooperation Belgium - Romania

4<sup>th</sup> Forum October 25-27, 2013 Leuven

## **Workshop Healthcare: What's new / innovative / important?**

### **Panel:**

- Ioan Suru, local coordinator ADAMS and vice president The Open Network
- Luc Bijmens, General Director W-Y Cross Limburg, Belgium
- Tonnie Steeman, General Director CM Mechelen-Turnhout, Belgium
- Cristina Vladu, Counselor Ministry of Health Romania

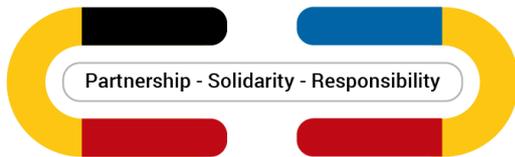
**Moderator:** Jozef Goebels, president ADR-Vlaanderen and The Open Network.

### **Summary of the discussion**

The healthcare in Romania is still in transition and a reform of the medical system is needed. In this context, the good practices regarding the health care, implemented during the past 25 years in cooperation between Belgian and Romanian local partners, are most relevant, especially with regards to empowering local authorities and inhabitants for health and healthcare. This can be done through local health committees, community health centers, building out home care, health education and prevention actions, etc. The main objectives of this workshop were to make known the success stories of the long bilateral cooperation between BE and RO in this field. One of the most important outcomes was the facilitation of contacts between relevant actors (authorities, medical staff, associations, etc.) in order to spread these best practices in other RO municipalities. The main conclusions of the discussions were that the ADAM project could be an ideal solution for solving a lot of the difficulties in dealing with the health care at local level and that an intelligent adaptation of the BE mutuality health care model could be a source of inspiration for the reforms of the national medical system envisaged in RO.

### **1. Presentation of good practices in Romania on healthcare:**

- **CLS:** "Local Health Committees" in cooperation with local administration, local health actors and citizens: under the umbrella of "The Open Network for community development". Ioan Suru from The Open Network Slatina Timis made a presentation of the local 'health committees'. CLS get together community leaders, medical care providers, social organizations, special interest groups and the inhabitants (patients). They analyze the state of the local health and healthcare: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. One of the important aspects of the CLS is that the decision making process and the implementation is done with the active 'participation' of the citizens. This model is most relevant within the process of decentralization of the health care in RO and is a good illustration of how limited resources can be efficiently used.
- **ADAM:** Ioan Suru, local coordinator ADAMS and vice-president of the Open Network, presented the pilot project of ADAM Slatina-Timis. ADAM is a community health center, inspired from the model of the Belgian mutualities. It is a local primary health care center with membership and based on solidarity and in collaboration with the private and public health care sectors. The project is partially based on volunteer engagement on different levels: health care, board, social and complementary actions (youth, handicapped, elderly, etc.). ADAM is nonprofit oriented, but aiming at becoming self-supporting after a starting period. It guarantees social fixed prices for the members and cooperating with Romanian official bodies (CNAS, CJAS, DSP). ADAM offers health services to 2483 patients, of which 1700 have a national health insurance, supplementing thus significantly the regional public health system.



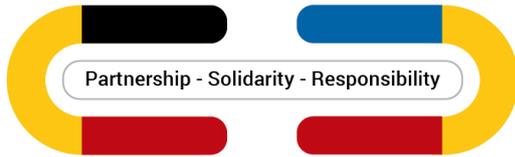
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- **Home care:** Hendrik Van Gansbeke General Coordinator W-Y Cross Flanders made a presentation of the 'Fundatia Crucea Alb-Galbena' in Romania, founded by the Flemish White-Yellow Cross in the '90. Home care is cost refraining for the patient and government. The hospitalization period has to be as short as possible and good cooperation between family doctors, specialists and hospitals are needed.
- **Presentation of mutuality's in B:** Tonnie Steeman, General Director, CM Mechelen-Turnhout made a presentation on the particularities of the health care system in Belgium.

## 2. Round table on basis of the presentations, Q&A:

- The projects that have been presented have more than 10 years of experience and prove the maturity of the decentralized cooperation in the field of health and health care.
- CLS and ADAM represent a very important asset in the process of decentralization of the medical system in Romania. Multiplying these models of "local mutualities" would contribute significantly to the reform, modernization and adaptation of the medical services to the patient's needs. The success of these initiatives is based on an integrated approach of the medical and human resources in order to ensure an effective access of the patient to health care. The doctor has a direct relationship with the patient and is relieved of administrative burdens.
- The presentation of the Belgian health care system retained the interest of the participants, especially that of the representative of the Romanian ministry of health, as a source of inspiration for the reforms that remain to be done in Romania. Further analysis of the system is necessary in order to see how the system can be adapted to the Romanian realities and needs.
- Both Romanian and Belgian participants agreed that important deficiencies of the health care system in Romania have to be tackled in the future, especially with regards to the decentralization of the services, the qualified medical staff, financing, quality of the medical services, and access to the system for patients who have no medical insurance. One of the main obstacles is the lack of proper financing of the medical system.
- The representatives of the Crucii albe –Galbene from Romania noted the excessive commercialisation of the health care services provided by private companies at the cost of the patients, notably in the field of home care services. It was emphasized the fact that it is very difficult to ensure to control of the quality of the services within the present legal framework. New legislative measures in this respect would be highly needed.



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- It was underlined that one of the most important opportunities for improving the Romanian medical system is represented by an efficient absorption of the EU funds within the next financial perspective 2014-2020.
- It was recognized the importance of the prevention for the improvement of the general health condition of the population and for the limitation of the costs of the health care. More should be done to raise the public awareness regarding the role of the prevention.
- The W-Y Cross Flanders representative underlined the importance of the principle of solidarity in organizing the health care services in order to ensure the quality of the services provided and to avoid the commercialization of public health.

