

## Health and Social Care Committee

### HSC(4)-03-12 paper 3

#### Follow up action: EU legislation in preparation relevant to health inequalities

At the Committee's meeting on 8 December Lindsay Whittle AM asked for information on any EU legislation in preparation that is of relevance to the issue of health inequalities.

#### Health inequalities policy and actions

As noted at the meeting the background briefing provided information on the most recent policy action addressing health inequalities as a whole, namely the **Communication on Health Inequalities** published by the European Commission in 2009.

During the meeting I also referred to a **Joint Action Plan: Equity Action**, launched in 2010 as one of the actions to come out of the 2009 action plan.

I have obtained further information on this, which shows that the Welsh Government is one of the core partners of this initiative. The information I used at the meeting was taken from the [EuroHealthNet web-site](#). This did not show Wales as one of the listed partners.

However, in follow up research I have found dedicated Equity Action web-pages on the following web-site <http://www.health-inequalities.eu/>, which shows that Wales is listed as a partner in the project. This clarifies the point raised by Elin Jones AM at the meeting.

#### Other related areas

I also noted at the meeting that health inequalities is a broad issue cutting across a number of areas of policy work and action.

The [DG Health and Consumers web-site](#) of the European Commission lists the range of different areas affecting health inequalities, as does the [EU-Health portal](#) web-pages.

These are broad in scope and focus on the social environment within which people live. The briefing for the Committee's meeting on 8 December covered a number of issues relevant to this, such as the Europe 2020 Strategy (and a number of the flagship initiatives relevant to health issues), and the EU Health for Growth programme proposals.

One additional development that merits mention are the **EU Structural Funds programmes**, and in particular the [draft legislative proposals](#) for the 2014-2020 period published in October 2011. These proposals are the subject of an inquiry by the Enterprise and Business Committee. There is scope within the draft regulations to support actions within the area of health, whilst the European Commission has proposed that a minimum of 20 per cent of European Social Fund support actions should be ring-fenced to combatting poverty and social exclusion.