

Europe's Commissioner for Health has warned the economic crisis could turn into a health crisis by reducing patients' access to services.

Speaking on 6 June at a conference held by the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) at the premises of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Commissioner Dalli stressed that financial hardship could risk reversing advances in healthcare and that Government cuts to health spending could be a false economy.

On a more positive basis he saw opportunities in the economic crisis in as far as it can provide an incentive for making important reforms in delivery systems. He commended the European Council for launching a reflection process to identify effective ways of investing in health and explained that the European Commission would be supporting the process by constructing a panel of independent experts to give advice to EU countries on improving the efficiency of their health systems.

The Commission had already taken up such a role in relation to Greece and Portugal, agreeing with both countries a list of targets and measures to improve the sustainability of their health systems. These have included the rationalisation of pharmaceutical expenditure and the improvement of management practices.

More information [here](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

Speech [here](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

15 June 2012

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#### Links

[1] <http://www.euractiv.com/health/dalli-economic-crisis-turn-health-news-513253> [2]

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_2010-2014/dalli/docs/speech\\_06062012.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/dalli/docs/speech_06062012.pdf)