

Transforming Health Education

**Joint commitment of European stakeholders
for improving competencies to support
behaviour change in persons self-managing
chronic disease**

2022

Considering that:

- 1) Chronic diseases, also known as non-communicable diseases, are a global epidemic, responsible for 40.5 million deaths in 2016, corresponding to 71% of deaths worldwide¹.
- 2) Cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes and chronic lung diseases present the highest prevalence, which is expected to increase in the coming decades².
- 3) Reducing the burden of chronic diseases in Member States has been a priority for the European Commission through actions, such as CHRODIS, CHRODIS+, and the Healthier Together - EU Non-Communicable Diseases initiative.
- 4) Changing and sustaining health enhancing behaviours, such as exercise and a healthy diet, as well as other behaviours, such as medication-taking, is critical to address the epidemic of chronic diseases.
- 5) Self-management is defined as tasks performed by a person to minimise the impact of one's disease, with or without the support of health professionals; it encompasses a variety of health behaviours³.
- 6) Healthcare and other professionals are expected to support behaviour change for the self-management of chronic disease. Available evidence suggests the existence of a global workforce problem in respect of perceived knowledge and skills for behaviour change interventions³.
- 7) The permeation of behavioural change science, and in particular standardised behaviour change techniques, in the education and training of health and other professionals is still incipient³.

¹ World Health Organization (WHO). Noncommunicable diseases: Mortality. The Global Health Observatory. <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/topic-details/GHO/ncd-mortality>

² World Health Organization. Global Status Report on noncommunicable diseases 2014: "Attaining the nine global noncommunicable diseases targets; a shared responsibility.". Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014.

³ Guerreiro, M. P., Strawbridge, J., Cavaco, A. M., Félix, I. B., Marques, M. M., & Cadogan, C. (2021). Development of a European competency framework for health and other professionals to support behaviour change in persons self-managing chronic disease. *BMC Medical Education*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-021-02720-w>

Healthcare students and professionals, academic educators and institutions have identified chronic diseases management as a priority to be addressed at European level for strong and equitable access to quality care at Member States level:

- 1) **Train4Health**⁴, funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union under the grant agreement no. 2019–1-PT01-KA203– 061389, is a strategic partnership involving seven European Institutions across five countries, which seeks to improve behaviour change support competencies for the self-management of chronic disease. Hallmarks of the Train4Health project include drawing on behavioural change science and co-production with users of educational products.

The Train4Health project developed a transnational interprofessional competency framework³, that guided the development of a transnational curriculum⁵, comprising learning outcomes, educational activities (case studies, a massive open on-line course, and a simulation software), and assessment activities. Resources are open access and aligned with European Union policy on digital transformation in education and training.

- 2) EPSA⁶ is an umbrella organisation of **European Pharmaceutical Students' Associations**, representing more than 100.000 students in 36 European countries. EPSA's core vision is to reach and engage pharmaceutical students in Europe by collaborating on the development of the future of pharmacy, education, and healthcare together, by being a hub for pharmaceutical knowledge, student engagement, and collaboration between students, professionals, and patients. EPSA aims to help students become active professionals in patient-centred care, through its activities in congresses, soft skills training events, publications, campaigns, exchange programmes, collaboration with professionals, and virtual presence.

By assessing teaching tools and methodologies⁷ in healthcare and participating in policy initiatives⁸, EPSA has also taken part in bringing the training of healthcare students and professionals closer to, and up to date to the evolution of health services.

⁴ <https://www.train4health.eu>

⁵ https://www.train4health.eu/resources/casestudies/T4H_IO1%20report_v12_20211229_PUBLIC.pdf

⁶ <https://www.epsa-online.org/>

⁷The Methodology Booklet is an EPSA project that has the objective of collecting pharmaceutical students' and recent graduates' opinions on teaching methodologies around Europe and sharing these with educators. <https://www.epsa-online.org/methodology-booklet/>

⁸ White Paper on Pharmaceutical Skills and Education (2022)

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/2/folders/1D_RRsz86GJYaKUobopby6xQVVu0VG6zs6

- 3) The **European Medical Students' Association** - Association Européenne des Étudiants en Médecine (EMSA) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing medical students from all across Europe. Founded in 1990 in Brussels, it is the only voice of students within the European Medical Organisations. EMSA is recognized by the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations. The association provides a platform for high-level advocacy, projects, training, workshops, and international meetings. Its activities gather around Medical Education, Medical Ethics and Human Rights, Health Policy, Public Health, Medical Science, and European Integration and Culture. EMSA represents over 50.000 medical students across 30 European countries.
- 4) The **European Nursing Student Association** (ENSA) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing nursing students from all across Europe. The registered office is established at 1000 Brussels, Rue de la Source 18, La Famille des Infirmières. ENSA is recognised by the European Commission, the International Council of Nurses, the European Federation of Nurses (EFN) and the United Nations. The association cooperates with national and international nurses, nursing students and health organisations. ENSA also participates in programmes or projects to improve the profile of nursing students, the standards of nursing training and international practice. Wherever possible, spreading information, news and opinions that may be of interest for nursing students, the nursing profession and governmental and political organisations.
- 5) **European Dental Students' Association** (EDSA) was founded in 1988 in Paris to represent the interests of dental students throughout Europe. The EDSA members are National Associations or Local Associations that represent over 70 000 dental students in 33 countries. EDSA's goals are:
- To inform students about European organisations and politics in relation to dentistry;
 - To promote, inquire and describe the harmonisation of dental curriculum within European dental schools;
 - To promote exchange programmes and encourage students to take part in these programmes;
 - To encourage national dental students' associations to co-operate on an international level;
 - To create possibilities to encourage students to meet each other on an individual level.

6) **European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations (EFPSA)** celebrates its 35th anniversary since it was established in 1987, at the first International Congress of Psychology Students in Portugal. It is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation Federation that currently consists of 30 psychology Member Organisations and two Observer Organisations. Currently EFPSA organises eleven events across Europe and hosts several online resources. EFPSA also runs its own training service, a research programme, a fully reviewed and open-access Journal; facilitates studying, working and travelling abroad; and makes a positive impact on society through social impact campaigns. Altogether EFPSA provides psychology students with unique and exciting opportunities for academic, professional and personal development.

At the heart of all EFPSA activities are four core goals:

- To serve psychology students;
- To contribute to society;
- To improve psychology;
- To link professionals, academics, and students.

7) The **European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy (EAFP)** was founded in 1992 by a group of pharmacy academics meeting in Paris Sud. The mission of EAFP is to lead advancement of pharmacy education and research to reflect developments in pharmacy and the needs of society. This is achieved by facilitating contacts and collaboration between University-level schools of pharmacy, supporting member faculties in their efforts to develop effective methods of learning and teaching and developing harmonised European quality standards for the structure and outcomes of pharmacy education. EAFP consists of Higher Education Institutions offering courses that confer upon graduates the qualifications required for the recognition as a professional pharmacist as outlined by EC regulations. EAFP is at the forefront of developments in pharmacy education and pharmacy in the various professional settings including community pharmacy, hospital and clinical pharmacy, industrial pharmacy and the pharmaceutical regulatory field. EAFP serves as a platform for its member institutions to be part of the changes, plan the future and address challenges to ensure that the high standards that are achieved in pharmacy education and research within faculties of pharmacy are maintained.

These stakeholders are committed to jointly improve students and health and other professionals' competencies to support behaviour change in persons self-managing chronic disease, through the following actions:

- I. Stakeholders representing health care and other students
 - a. To raise awareness about the Train4Health curriculum, and in particular the educational activities that can be pursued independently by students (MOOC, simulation software), to supplement undergraduate education.
 - b. To work collaboratively with academic educators to incorporate the Train4Health curriculum in existing curricula, as part of existing modules or stand-alone.
- II. Stakeholders representing academic educators
 - a. To raise awareness about the Train4Health curriculum in European Higher Education Institutions.
 - b. Aid the incorporation of the Train4Health curriculum in existing curricula, as part of existing modules or stand-alone.
- III. Stakeholders representing professionals
 - a. To raise awareness about the Train4Health curriculum, and in particular the educational activities that can be pursued independently by professionals (MOOC, simulation software), for continuing development purposes.

All stakeholders are also committed to share their experience in improving students plus health and other professionals' competencies to support behaviour change in persons self-managing chronic disease through meetings and other initiatives, to further advance this endeavour.

Stakeholders' names and logos

- Train4Health project
- European Pharmaceutical Students' Association (EPSA)
- European Medical Students' Association (EMSA)
- European Nursing Students' Association (ENSA)
- European Dental Students' Association (EDSA)
- European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations (EFPSA)
- European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy (EAFP)



European Dental Students' Association



EAFP EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF FACULTIES OF PHARMACY