



First High Piloting Committee Meeting for the Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital April 8-10, 2005 in Algiers, Algeria;

**Outcomes to be presented during the first EUMEDIS International Conference
on April 17-18, 2005 in Jordan**

EMISPHER Press release, March 23, 2005

Upon invitation by the Minister of Health, Population and Hospital Reform of Algeria and put under the high patronage of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Algeria, the first summit meeting for the creation of the High Piloting Committee of the Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital (VEMH) will take place in Algiers, Algeria from April 8-10, 2005 (see www.sante.dz/). Ministers of Health of ~30 countries at the Mediterranean, Adriatic and Black Sea have been invited.

The VEMH builds on the successful implementation of EMISPHER (Pilot project 110 under the EUMEDIS programme) that deployed and put in operation an internet-satellite platform dedicated to medical e-learning, real-time telemedicine and medical assistance, that currently connects 10 sites in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The VEMH will be the key structure for lasting and sustainable international cooperation for the improvement and globalisation of Health care. It will establish and integrate the communication and Grid infrastructures required for the deployment and implementation of Evidence-Based Medicine as basis for equal access to best medical expertise and the establishment and spread of best medical practise throughout the EU and its neighbours, not only in the South (Mediterranean, Adriatic and Black Sea) but also in the East.

Following the successful implementation of EMISPHER as first step towards the VEMH in the Mediterranean region, a GÉANT-based communication and Grid infrastructures for the VEMH in Eastern Europe is planned (GeTinVEMH project proposal submitted on 17.03.05 under the latest Research Infrastructures call). As first step, a terrestrial network with 10 sites in the new EU member states and Associated Candidate Countries will be set up.

VEMH will integrate the various infrastructures and dedicated networks like EMISPHER, GeTinVEMH and EUMEDCONNECT and will also integrate and profit from important outcomes of other EUMEDIS projects in the health sector (e.g. EMPHIS) and education sector (e.g. ODISEAME).

It is expected that the first meeting of the High Piloting Committee of the Virtual Euro-Mediterranean Hospital announces an official support of the region's governments for this initiative. Accordingly, Governments should facilitate the finalisation of the project as a new European Commission Initiative in terms of developing information society in the field of health in the light of the Barcelona process.

The meeting of the Health Ministers, members of the High Piloting Committee, which will be held on Sunday 10 April 2005, is preceded by a meeting planned on Friday April 08th 2005 composed of experts of the ongoing projects within the EUMEDIS initiative, experts of the European Commission and experts designated by each country taking part in the High Piloting Committee Session.

The outcomes of this first High Piloting Committee Meeting will be presented to the larger EUMEDIS community during the first EUMEDIS International Conference in Jordan only one week later (see www.eumedisconference.org/).

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