

**EHC NOW!**



## 2018 EHC Workshop on Tenders and Procurement

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From 7-9 September, some 20 volunteers from across Europe gathered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, to attend the third and final edition of the EHC Workshop on Tenders and Procurement, an event made possible thanks to an educational grant from Pfizer. The objective of the weekend was to equip patient representatives from EHC National Member Organisation (NMOs) with the tools, skills and reflexes to take part in their national procurement process of medicinal products for the treatment of haemophilia and other rare bleeding disorders.

### ***Smooth sailing?***

We realise that spending two days listening to health economic concepts is not the most appealing way to spend a weekend, especially when in Amsterdam! Yet participants were actively engaged and involved because they know the landscape is changing.

On the one hand, the economic crisis from 2008 has taken its toll on European health care systems and has left payers increasingly wary of novel and expensive medicinal products. On the other hand, haemophilia has never seen so many varied and innovative treatment options coming its way. This makes for a perfect storm in which payers are critical of the real added value of novel therapies and an unwillingness to reimburse limits patient access. One of the workshop participants, himself from a national health care system, made this point strongly over the weekend. It was eye opening for participants to see that through his eyes haemophilia is an expensive-to-treat condition for which effective therapies already exist.

*"If you don't get involved in your national procurement processes, there may as well not be novel products because they'll just pass you by,"* warned EHC President Brian O'Mahony over the weekend.

Motivating words for a workshop that builds on five previous years of EHC training in the area of economics, tenders and procurement. That is how important it is to our community to get patient representatives actively participating in the room when national decisions are made about the procurement, organisation and delivery of treatment and care. It is an entirely achievable goal, said Brian over the weekend, arguing *"it is easier to teach a person with haemophilia about health economics than it is to teach a procurement specialist about haemophilia."*

Following this impetus, much of the tender workshop was spent presenting participants with novel ways to demonstrate how new technologies in haemophilia care can help to increase trough levels while achieving savings for health care systems in the long-run. This is not straightforward and, at first sight, novel technologies can be perceived by the untrained eye of a general procurement specialist as expensive and un-necessary. Therefore it is crucial that patient representative be heard and be in the room when decisions are made with regard to the procurement of novel therapies.

### ***Get up stand up!***

Bob Marley could not have rolled up his sleeves better himself. After going through a '101' on how to get involved in the tender process, participants reviewed both existing and novel therapies with a focus amongst others on health economics, safety and efficacy, tendering processes, and finally: practice! practice! practice! In fact, during the workshop we spent the entire Sunday morning carrying out a variety of practical

exercises such as mock tenders. These looked at comparing standard treatment with extended half-life treatment and with non-replacement therapies. They certainly gave everyone in the room lots of food for thought (!) - and were by far the preferred part of the workshop, according to their feedback!

***The EHC Tenders and Procurement Workshop is here to stay***

You read it correctly! The EHC is not done training its members on the topic of economics, tenders and procurement. As made evident above, we believe that this is of crucial importance to the community and therefore we will continue to give it much weight and attention in our and our members' advocacy work! This is why the EHC is planning a new three-year series on tenders and procurement focusing in even more depth on novel therapies. The series started in September 2019 so stay tuned to the various EHC social media channels for updates and more information!

