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Press release | 27.10.2010

Cross-border healthcare

EP vote strikes right balance between patients' rights and safeguarding health services

The European Parliament's environment committee this morning voted on proposed EU rules on access and rights to cross-border healthcare (1). Green MEPs broadly welcomed the outcome as striking the right balance. After the vote Dutch Green MEP and Greens/EFA shadow draftsperson on the legislation, **Bas Eickhout**, said:

"Today's vote strikes the right balance between guaranteeing patients' rights to cross-border healthcare and safeguarding the provision of quality health services at national level. Patients should have the right to get hospital treatment in other member states and be reimbursed as they would for receiving the treatment at home, however this right should not be at the expense of the viability of national health systems.

"The proposal would allow member states to establish a reasonable system of prior authorisation for treatment, with MEPs succeeding in significantly narrowing the list of reasons for which a patient can be refused cross-border treatment. Importantly, member states would no longer be able to refuse reimbursement after prior authorisation has been granted, which was a key concern. We hope that Council will take these improvements on board, so that the legislation can be finalised as soon as possible."

(1) Grosstête report on patients rights in cross-border healthcare - legislative vote in second reading.

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