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Euro Health Consumer Index 2008

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Measuring the expanding European healthcare landscape since 2005, the Health Consumer Powerhouse finds reasons to be optimistic about the development of European healthcare. There are evident positive trends – but also challenges to meet.

After our four years of comparisons we now see that the leading healthcare systems start adopting consumer trends. Some of the fore-runners seem to implement strategies with the aim to support choice by providing information and via consumer priorities building a down-top pressure for improvement of services and quality of care.

Patient rights legislation has become common around Europe (a fact in a slight majority of the 31 assessed national healthcare systems). In almost as many there is the right of a second opinion and free access to your medical record. This builds patient empowerment essential to meet tomorrow's challenges in values, demography and funding. Here partnership between the individual and the care system will be the tool. Closing the gap between patients and professionals has to be part of any grand strategy for the future.

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