

CARITAS SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO HOSTS EUROPEAN CARITAS GATHERING ON HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

Home care is the answer to specific needs in a rapidly ageing Europe

Pressinfo Caritas Europa. Brussels, 3 June 2008. – With a view to a rapidly ageing Europe, home care provides a crucial answer to the increasing demands for care, especially from the elderly. Caritas organisations are profoundly engaged in the support of sick, disabled and vulnerable elderly people. In over twenty European countries they are directly involved in providing home care services and training. There are also at least eight European countries, where Caritas organisations are acting as donors for implementing home care in other European countries.

During the Second Caritas Europa Home Care Forum, which will be held in Belgrade (Serbia) on 4-6 June 2008, four different home care models will be discussed by about sixty attendees. These include, among others, senior management of Caritas home care programmes and representatives of national governments. In the session dedicated to 'Aging well in Europe' MEP Frieda Brepoels will give an overview of related EU policies.

Since 2006, health and long-term care is included in the National Strategic Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, which Member States are required to deliver to the European Commission. Access to adequate treatment and that the need for care does not lead to poverty and financial dependency are important guiding principles. Therefore, through their competence in home care, Caritas organisations not only provide a much needed service, but also have a considerable potential to enrich and influence the shaping of innovative policies with regard to health and long-term care.

The First Caritas Europa Home Care Forum held in 2006 identified the common ground for Caritas organisations to develop home care services. The Second Forum will provide inputs for further research, study and reflection in order to nourish relevant Caritas advocacy work at different levels. The event will include a photo exhibition: under the motto 'Home care, who cares, Caritas cares', participants will present pictures and testimonies illustrating typical beneficiaries of home care services in their countries.

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This conference is supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields. The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries. To that effect, PROGRESS purports at: providing analysis and policy advice on employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas; monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas; promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large. For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html