

## Q.1 Analysis

**Agreed definition: Only 4/14 countries, with some qualifications.**

**FRA:** Definition of *patient involvement* because empowerment difficult to translate in French: title of guideline: 'Supporting and encouraging public engagement in social and health care organisations'. Definition:

"In social and health care organisations, stakeholder engagement refers to any form of action, be it individual or collective, for the benefit of their health, well-being or quality of life, or that of their peers.

This engagement in turn requires the engagement of professionals and decision-makers to ensure that the experience, needs and preferences of stakeholders are considered, both in health and social care and in the improvement of practices and organisations, as well as in teaching and research.

This joint engagement contributes to a better service for stakeholders and their increased empowerment"

**SLO:** Yes, but only really in relation to diabetes ( although the concept is widely used in the Resolution on National Healthcare Plan 2016-2025):

"Empowerment is a process in which the patient recognizes their role in health team. The patient acquires knowledge and skills, and increases over time control of the disease and quality of life. In the process of empowering, the role of healthcare professional and the patient are being redeployed, while the patient is becoming increasingly more independent. So, empowering patients is a process that allows people to increase control over their own lives and which strengthens people's ability to action on matters they themselves identify as important." (taken from the Empathie project (*not! More like the Kayser definition*))

**DAN:** There seems to be a consensus rather than a debate about what it is:

The ability for individuals for act, control, and lead decisions and actions that affect their health and everyday life.

**ITAL:** 'Empowerment is a process of social action through which people, organizations and communities gain competence over their lives, in order to change their social and political environment to improve equity and quality of

life': from Wallerstein N. 2006, What is the evidence on effectiveness of empowerment to improve health?, Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe - Health Evidence Network report; [https://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/74656/E88086.pdf](https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/74656/E88086.pdf)).

### **No, but... responses: 5**

**SWE:** The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare have no direct definition of empowerment. In Swedish, the word empowerment is often translated to "egenmakt" ("own power"). Some concepts related to empowerment are very much discussed: "patient participation", "person centered care", "self care" etc. However, no definition is given from an official level

**CZK:** No, there is NOT. The closest to a definition is "To strengthen the role of patients and support capacity building of patient organizations in order to strengthen their role as equal partners in healthcare."

**GER:** Empowerment is a term used in different contexts, an official definition can be found at the German Federal Centre for Health Education (*not there*), derived from international definitions. One of the goals of empowerment, the process of enabling people to deal with themselves and their health in a way that is good for themselves, is addressed under a number of other terms in Germany: Health education, health literacy education, patient orientation, etc.

**ESP:** (Catalonia): There isn't a specific definition of patient empowerment either at national or regional level. In Catalonia there are a number of very similar definitions by several organisations from the Regional Ministry of Health Patient participation programme to many scientific and professional bodies, along with the patient advisory council of Catalonia.

To summarise all the definition in one, I have come up with the following:

The definition of patient empowerment and patient engagement, both can be combined as the process through which individuals and communities are able to express their needs, present their concerns, devise strategies for involvement in decision-making, and take political, social, and cultural action to meet those needs.

**NL:** The closest to a communal definition is the concept of ‘Samen beslissen’ or ‘Shared decision making’.

“When deciding together, people look together with a healthcare provider for the treatment or care that suits him or her best. What fits best depends on what someone thinks is important. Deciding together is done in one or more conversations. In it, the caregiver and caregiver discuss all possibilities and what they mean for a person's life.”

**Compare EPF website definition:**

Patient empowerment is one of the key elements of patient-centred healthcare. It can be seen as both a pre-requisite for and an outcome of patient-centred healthcare – a goal as well as a process.

Patient empowerment is defined in multiple ways depending on the context and objectives. EPF defines it as a “process that helps people gain control over their own lives and increases their capacity to act on issues that they themselves define as important”. We also see it as a relational concept where the environment a patient finds themselves in plays a critical role. Aspects of empowerment include health literacy, shared decision-making and self-management.