

## Executive summary

### What HCN will deliver for members, partners and sponsors

Health ClusterNET (HCN) enables member regions to achieve cost-effective economic and social benefits from health sector investment through innovative solutions. These are based on shared good practice 'know-how' informing clear policy recommendations supported by policy and performance management tools that take account of the different development priorities and capacity of regions.

Members **get access to:**

#### **Practical 'how to' Knowledge programmes:**

- Engaging local SMEs in regional health markets
- Sustainable and effective health innovation markets
- Integrated regional development
- Affordable health care capital investment
- Inclusive and attractive health sector employment

#### **Online resources through the Knowledge Laboratory**

- Trend analyses
- Model policies
- Case studies
- Briefing papers and breakthrough ideas
- Datasets
- Benchmarking tools
- Performance management tools for integrated policy initiatives
- Presentations
- News and events

#### **Personal and organisational learning through the Knowledge programmes and Development Group**

- Comparative learning sets
- Master classes
- Thematic learning workshops
- Policy roundtables

#### **Added value through the Network Hub:**

- Access to in-depth knowledge and expertise
- Strengthening the members peripheral vision
- Creating shared value through collaboration
- Expanding networks and contacts

## **Purpose of the business plan**

This business plan shows how HCN will build on its initial phase as an Interreg IIIC funded operation to become an effective and independent knowledge resource for members, partners and sponsors.

## **Background: building on the Interreg IIIC phase**

Since 2005, HCN had an exciting start as an Interreg IIIC funded operation that partner regions now want to build on. It has developed a clearer understanding of a shared challenge for all partners: how regional health sector investment and assets can better contribute to regional economic and social development priorities. Through its focus on four connections (local procurement, affordable capital investment, employment and innovation) it has enabled partners to share knowledge, experience and ideas about how to successfully address this challenge.

Through interregional cooperation the operation has helped partner regions strengthen their integrated planning skills and laid foundations for future EU and regionally funded projects. Four workshops have produced 50 good practice case studies. Four policy forums have will have produced over 100 clear policy recommendations for regions and EC directorates by September 2007. The policy recommendations reflect where regions are in terms of economic performance, Lisbon orientation and engagement between regional health systems and other public and private sectors.

## **The impact of HCN activity has resulted in:**

- Over 40 actions and pilot projects in partner regions including the setting up of new intersectoral regional partnerships to stimulate and inform local action.
- Eight regions identifying policies that will be reviewed by their region to increase the contribution of health sector investment to regional development in one or more of the four current HCN knowledge themes.
- Four regions confirming that HCN policy recommendations and knowledge have already influenced relevant policies and other instruments at regional/local levels based on insights developed by the Network.
- One spin-off project led by Human Technology Styria waiting for the result of a bid for FP7 Regions for Knowledge funding.
- Three current partner and future member regions developing spin-off Interreg IVC and FP7 bids in 2007.

With support from existing partners, in January 2008 HCN will build on the success of its Interreg IIIC phase by becoming an interregional European network formalised as an EC recognised non-profit organisation.

## **The core purpose of HCN in the future**

The aim of HCN is to develop a reputation across Europe for supporting the contribution of health sector investment to regional development and the wellbeing of their communities. As a service provider and as an economic and social actor, the network can have an important impact in informing development of and maintaining coherent health systems in regions and for their communities. In achieving this, a basic principle for regional health

systems should be to assure quality and universal access, keeping equity for all the citizens in health care.

HCN will deliver benefits for members, partners and clients through four interrelated knowledge management functions: a knowledge programme with five working groups and learning sets, a virtual knowledge laboratory with an interactive website, networking networks and other knowledge sources, a development group offering professional development and research support.

The main players in the emerging regional health economy are:

- Regional and local authorities
- Regional and local health services
- Universities and research centres
- Enterprise and other economic actors.

HCN will work as a focused high value knowledge hub for members, partners and clients providing the following benefits (see Section's 2-4):

- Using information exchange, training, development and next wave performance assessment approaches, it will help regions maximise the contribution of health care systems and their associated economic clusters to regional development and wellbeing in their communities.
- Supporting rapid development of knowledge that can be quickly operationalised by health systems, associated knowledge resources, local communities, the business sector and regional governments to deliver cost effective services.
- Informing and guiding the development of a network of health clusters, looking to the improvement of productivity and competence of regional industries in the health sector supply chain and as partners in innovation.
- Build knowledge, understanding, expertise and capacity that strengthens the links between health sector investment, integrated regional policies and developing wellbeing in regions and sub-regions that helps members and partners to do anything that might help improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing as well as improving life satisfaction in their communities
- Continued HCN membership will enable regions to take advantage of its growing reputation through HCN and co-sponsored publications, the quality and relevance of member regions/organisations and advocacy skills as they seek to influence agenda and initiatives in their own regions, country and within relevant EC directorates.
- The Network offers a clear opportunity for members, partners and clients who are developing potential collaborative ideas to meet and communicate with other network members about potential interest in and contributions to future projects.

## **How HCN will be funded and financially sustainable**

In this next stage (see Section's 3 and 5), the Network will be funded from several sources:

- Full member, associate and NGO member fees
- Start-up support in year 1
- Spin-off projects lead by a member organization in which HCN is a partner

- EC funded projects that HCN leads
- Sponsorship
- Income from development, research and training

There are two important first steps:

- To secure a start-up fund that would be a safeguard for cashflow to meet running costs within year 1, up to the point where the income streams are sufficiently activated.
- To secure a reasonable and progressive level of subscription for the main groups of members (see Membership Structure section). The amounts suggested are based on (i) review of core services that will be attractive to members (ii) review of fee structures for other successful and failing Networks.

HCN is already a partner in one FP7 bid and will be working with existing partners to develop and submit four other FP7 and Interreg IV bids in 2007.