

November 27, 2025: Memorial Symposium for Prof. Schwartz at MHH

Today the memorial symposium for Prof. Schwartz, MD, a 'founding father' of Public Health in Germany was held in Hanover, Germany. Ursula von der Leyen, MD, President of the European Commission and Alumna of Public Health at Hanover Medical School gave the keynote presentation. She pointed to four fundamental pillars applicable to Public Health in general as well as to the developing European Health Union:

1) Global Responsibility: Health and well-being may not be defined purely on a local or national level. Pandemic experience such as COVID-19 clearly indicate that collaborative global efforts are mandatory to master prevailing and upcoming health challenges.

2) Foresight: Climate change and natural disasters/ loss of natural resources will result in major challenges to Public Health in the mid- to longterm. Longterm, visionary activities are urgently required to face those challenges.

3) Innovation: Innovation is a key driver of Public Health; at a time of rapidly changing global research and innovation conditions the aim is to ascertain and grow Europe's innovative capacity. Outcomes of various respective activities such as the talent development program 'choose europe' were reported. <https://www.chooseeurope.eu/>

4) Trust: Finally, an environment of trust is mandatory to approach any existing and upcoming challenges in Public Health. Currently, a rapid increase in disinformation, manipulation and doubt can be widely observed, resulting in major challenges for both, individual and societal health. Jörg Ruof, Alumnus of Public Health at Hannover Medical School was invited to join the symposium on behalf of the European Access Academy (EAA). From an EAA secretariat point of view the suggested 4 pillars for Public Health also provide the guardrails for the evolving EUHTA environment.

i) Development of trust across the key stakeholder groups involved in the EU HTA process; ii) an embracing attitude for meaningful innovation; iii) foresight and predictability e.g., by rapid development of sufficient capacities for Joint Scientific Consultations; and iv) finally, an in depth understanding of global research, development, and commercialisation status and needs will provide a solid foundation for the prevailing aim of EAA: i.e, supporting the successful implementation of EU HTA for the benefit of patients and society as a whole, as the EU HTA Regulation stipulates.

The EAA secretariat would like to thank i) Professor Schwartz for his lifetime achievement to develop Public Health, ii) the Hanover Medical School and the MHH Institut für Epidemiologie, Sozialmedizin & Gesundheitssystemforschung for organizing the symposium and iii) Ursula von der Leyen for her visionary and encouraging presentation.

