

**Press Release: 27 September 2010**

**EUROPA DONNA advocates share advocacy strategies to reduce health inequalities and foster healthy ways of life at EUROPA DONNA Breast Cancer Advocacy Leader Conference**

EUROPA DONNA – The European Breast Cancer Coalition’s first **Breast Cancer Advocacy Leader Conference**, held on 25 September 2010, welcomed 62 national representatives and delegates from 36 countries to further equip them in their advocacy to reduce the vast disparities in breast cancer mortality across Europe. The conference and the ensuing Proceedings Highlights document are supported by the European Union in the framework of the Public Health Programme.\*

“Our purpose is to eradicate the inequalities between countries and to see that women in all our member countries have access to the same level of service for mammography screening as well as access to care in specialist breast units. This conference will further assist all our members in advocating for these services using an evidence-based approach,” said Ellen Verschuur, EUROPA DONNA President.

The conference aimed to help advocates build upon their current experience in advocating for the implementation of the *European Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis* and to promote healthy ways of life, using EUROPA DONNA’s 15 October Breast Health Day campaign as a model. Two main sessions were dedicated to each theme and featured presentations by renowned speakers, followed by interactive workshops where advocates described activities undertaken in their countries, the obstacles faced and suggested methods to overcome them.

“Evidence-based guidelines are important in reducing inequalities and our leadership can make the difference. We now have the tools necessary for success. EUROPA DONNA representatives throughout Europe are the key to getting others on board, both advocates and professional partners, and getting the EU guidelines implemented,” said Susan Knox, EUROPA DONNA Executive Director.

The main presentations included:

- Current evidence about the efficacy of mammography screening programmes set up according to the *EU Guidelines*: overcoming obstacles to the implementation of screening programmes, by Prof. Peter B. Dean, Professor of Diagnostic Radiology, University of Turku, and Director of Breast Imaging, Turku University Hospital, Finland
- What the *EU Guidelines* say about Specialist Breast Units: overcoming obstacles in the implementation of Specialist Breast Units, by Dr. Marco Rosselli del Turco, President of the European Society of Breast Cancer Specialists (EUSOMA)

- Epidemiology and facts about lifestyle and breast cancer prevention, by Dr. Carlo LaVecchia, Chief of Epidemiology, Mario Negri Institute in Milan, Italy and temporary advisor at the International Agency for Research on Cancer and at the World Health Organization (IARC/WHO)

The Proceedings Highlights document will be distributed widely in early 2011.

To support Breast Health Day 2010 and join the campaign, please visit:

- <http://www.breasthealthday.org/>
- [www.facebook.com/EuropaDonna](http://www.facebook.com/EuropaDonna)
- <http://twitter.com/BreastHealthDay>
- <http://www.youtube.com/BreastHealthDay>

\* This conference arises from the project "ED Breast Cancer Advocacy Leader Conference" which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Public Health Programme.