
PRESS RELEASE

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MEZIS achieves Break-through with first International “No-Free-Lunch”-Meeting

„Luther“ places demands at centers of the health care lobby

Representatives of „No-Free-Lunch“-groups from 15 nations and all continents accepted the invitation of their German partner initiative “MEZIS – Mein Essen zahl’ ich selbst” (translation: I pay for my food myself). Together, they worked on conflicts of interest in health care and their implications between the 15th and 17th of September 2017 in the “House of Democracy and Human Rights” in Berlin.

„We are overwhelmed by the positive response and are glad that we achieved the kickoff to regular multinational meetings” - Sabine Hensold, assistant of the director of MEZIS, is pleased. Apart from the different initiatives getting to know each other, participants could attend various workshops that covered the myriad forms of influence on doctors, institutional corruption and the insufficient attention toward conflicts of interest internationally and discuss possible solutions.

„In some ways, our international colleagues are fighting the same problems as in Germany, such as horrendously high drug prices” summarizes Thomas Mayer, MD, member of the board of MEZIS, “but we also heard of large differences in the partner countries, such as in the design and implementation of anti-corruption laws”.

The participants agreed that larger efforts to inform doctors and medical students about the effects of conflicts of interest are necessary everywhere. “And we must continue to put pressure on politics to regulate the drug market as well as patents more strictly and to increase the oversight on authorization for new drugs”, emphasizes Christiane Fischer, MD, director of MEZIS and member of the German Ethics Committee.

The ten-year anniversary of the doctors’ initiative “Mein Essen zahl’ ich selbst” was honored in a ceremony, among the guests Martina Wenker, MD, vice president of the German Medical Association, was welcomed. The keynote speakers Christiane Fischer, MD, and Prof. Wolf-Dieter Ludwig proved in their speeches that the founding goals of the initiative are still relevant after ten years and that the challenges have increased with the new developments in the drug market.

„MEZIS thus has to grow!“, Manja Dannenberg, member of the board of MEZIS, stressed in her speech at the end of the two-day conference, “We have to persuade more and more of our colleagues to reject the influence of the pharmaceutical industry. Then the most important cogs in the machine will be missing – the doctors!”

On the occasion of the Luther-year, during a lobby ride, participants left three main demands on large banners at important centers of health policy and industry: at the Federal Chancellory “No patents on medication!”, at the seat of the Association of Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies “Publication of all trial data!”, and at the German Medical Association “Continuing Medical Education without sponsoring!”.

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The initiative of non-corruptible doctors MEZIS e.V. “Mein Essen zahl ich selbst” was founded in 2007:

- MEZIS fights against the pervasive influence of the pharmaceutical industrie
- MEZIS raises awareness among medical doctors and students: Those who accept sponsoring for pens, food, trials, travel costs and non-interventional studies may be influenced in their prescripting practice.
- MEZIS demands a clear prohibition of influence and corruption in medical professional law.
- MEZIS campaigns for information and continuing medical education independent of manufacturers and software for medical practice that is free of advertisements.
- MEZIS is part of the world-wide “No-free-lunch”-network.