

EPSO STATE OF AFFAIRS – 2026



European Partnership for
Supervisory Organisations
in Health Services and Social Care

Dear EPSO Partner,

May 2026, The Hague, The Netherlands

It has been a year since we sent you the EPSO State of Affairs– our annual update on activities and upcoming plans. That was April 2025, just before our successful and inspiring EPSO Conference at the Bailiwick of Jersey-Channel Islands. In this State of Affairs, you will find more details about our activities, along with reflections on EPSO and its future.

38th EPSO CONFERENCE

Our **38th EPSO conference in St Helier, Jersey 16 – 17 June 2025** hosted by the Jersey Care Commission (JCC) with participation of the EPSO - APAC (Asia-Pacific) network was entitled: Evolving Regulation for High-Quality of Care in a Changing World. The conference addressed key challenges for health and social care regulators with a focus on:

- **How to build a sustainable inspection and regulatory practice** (Learning from adverse events, regulatory challenges, service users, stakeholders, lived experiences)
- **Embracing evolving visions and trends in regulation**
 - integrated & preventive perspectives.
 - a broader (holistic) focus.
 - self-regulation, co-operation between internal and external regulation, digitalization of care.
- **New Areas in Regulation**
 - End of Life (Assisted dying).
 - Ambulance care.

We are proud to have succeeded in organizing such a fantastic – fully booked – conference together with our host, **the Jersey Care Commission**. We look back with extraordinary pleasure on the many educational experiences and inspiring contacts between the EPSO network partners. A lesson we learned from this conference is that the combination of so many enthusiastic, interactive participants and so many interesting topics can lead to long sessions that exceed acceptable working time. We apologize for this and will do better at future conferences.

39th EPSO CONFERENCE

The **39th EPSO Autumn conference in Dublin Ireland** had – after Jersey in June – to be organized by EPSO at short notice on the **24th and 25th of September 2025**. Together with the amazing support from our Irish hosts, we succeeded in staging a substantively outstanding conference in a more than excellent setting of the Royal Dublin Society, with a brilliant starter: the guided tour at Trinity College by prof. Jim Lucey, Inspector MHC & Clinical professor of psychiatry at Trinity College, who also was our conference presenter on day 2 of the conference.

The Conference in Dublin addressed key challenges for health and social care regulators, emphasizing important learning from recent research, looking to the future, and adapting to future demands. Main Conference themes in Dublin were:

- **Compliance and Enforcement -**
 - How to build effective compliance and enforcement?

- Challenges and learnings around various ways and models of enforcement:
 - Trust' versus Control mechanisms (Trust or Control, what is the best means to enforce regulatory principles and standards?), and
 - Effective yet less costly and less labour-intensive systems of regulation: conceivable applications of the various risk-driven models including risk-driven AI models?
- **Evidence based and updated Standards** for regulatory practice in health- and long-term care
- **Health Security-preparedness for civil and military crises**
 - challenges for the healthcare sector to be prepared for crises including military and war related crises and cyber-attacks,
 - preparedness by working based on the idea of 'One Health'– Cooperation between sectors to improve preparedness for a new health pandemic
 - preparedness for health-related effects of 'climate change'.

During the preparation and throughout the conference seamless collaboration with our Irish hosts contributed to the success of the conference. We were pleased to hear afterwards that the conference had also met their expectations and provided them with new and practical insights into their respective fields.

And once again participants highly appreciated the special EPSO format of our conferences with a limited number of delegates per country (a maximum of fifty people at a long table). Many of our partners found this to be an effective way of exchanging information and experiences. This setting makes it possible to discuss good as well as less good or effective practices in a trusted setting.

40th EPSO CONFERENCE

Our upcoming **40th EPSO conference in Valletta , Malta 16 – 17 June 2025** hosted by **The Older Persons Standards Authority OPSA** (with participation of the EPSO - APAC (Asia-Pacific) network has the title 'Working towards better health in a changing world with a view to high quality of regulation looking forward and adapting to future demands' with a subtitle: learning from recent research and from our EPSO colleagues.' The conference will address key challenges for health and social care regulators with a focus on the following themes:

- **Social Isolation and Loneliness**, a top priority and important policy issue for public health across all age groups.
 - Worldwide recognition of loneliness and social isolation as priority for public health by WHO and other international bodies and national authorities.
 - New research.
 - Findings from regulatory practice.
- **Regulation of Quality, Safety and Leadership in elderly care and long-term care.**
 - Challenges and handling perspective
- **Leadership in Learning from experience (including adverse events)** around Regulation and Enforcement of Quality, Safety and Innovation by EPSO Regulatory Network-partners.
 - Learning from experience: what methods & instruments are used by our colleagues for regulation and inspection?
- **Data infrastructure and the use of data and AI** by Regulators, Inspectorates and Supervisory organisations
 - How to use existing data infrastructure and manage new developments in data analysis and the use of AI.

We are looking forward to a great conference again! For more info, please look at our **Programme:** <https://epso-net.eu/upcoming-conferences/> and please note that the conference has almost reached its maximum number of EPSO delegates. However, registration for a limited number of participants is still possible and online participation is as usual free of charge and open to our EPSO network partners.

41st EPSO CONFERENCE

Our autumn conference, **the 41st EPSO -APAC conference will be held from 12-14 October 2026 in Singapore**, will be organised in close cooperation with our colleagues from **MOH Singapore, Duke-NUS University, and our Asia Pacific network**. We are already in an advanced state of preparation. The provisional topics are under discussion with our hosts in Singapore; several speakers have already confirmed their attendance. The conference will focus on questions for regulators and inspectorates: what needs to change? what is practically being tested (pilots/sandboxes)? what is holding systems back? This conference will also **make a start with fuelling new forms of co-operation between national regulators (EPSO Partners)**.

The proposed Main Conference themes are around **PPPP: Preparedness, Pilots and new thinking around innovation, Partnerships and People:**

- **Preparedness- changing perspectives of regulation**
 - Regulatory decision-making under uncertainty (e.g. during crises).
- **Pilots and New thinking around Health and Healthcare approaches**
 - New thinking around Complex decision making around healthcare resource allocation- what is GEH “Good enough’ Healthcare”? Setting limits to excellence? How do we keep our health staff and working conditions healthy?
 - Paradigm change – e-health and cross-border thinking in a ‘wider than Health’ context.
 - New Visions - New visions on regulatory improvement.
 - Crossing Barriers - New visions on regulatory barriers and intrinsic regulatory barriers to innovation.
 - New Methods -Learning in regulatory settings of Health and Social care (sandboxing and innovative thinking).
 - Innovative Instruments -AI guidelines working with multiple partnerships; Use of available data in health and social care partnerships.
- **Partnerships and People**
 - Proper stakeholder engagement and co-creation in health and social care; regulation with a special focus on Integrated care and its success and failing factors.
 - Focus on Leadership in a modern regulatory setting: bridging the gap between people and health.
 - Focus on people working in regulation of health and social care and their wellbeing, being well-trained and well-informed about cross-border innovation and working in partnership with colleagues in other sectors and countries.

FUTURE CONFERENCES

Furthermore, we would like to mention our **upcoming 42nd conference in Paris in the spring of 2027, hosted by IGAS France** (The General inspectorate for social affairs). IGAS is the office of the French government in charge of audit, evaluation and inspection for health, social security, and social care, in addition to employment and labour policies, programs and services.

And finally, we would like to mention our plan, if possible, to organize another conference in **Norway in Autumn 2027 in cooperation with the Norwegian Board of Health Supervision (Statens Helsetilsyn)**

This update and State of Affairs would not be complete without mentioning our **EPSO Monthly Meetings**, our **EPSO working groups** and our recently started **EPSO Training Activities**

EPSO MONTHLY MEETINGS

- **EPSO TF-C19 Monthly Network Meetings** - On the initiative of our **English colleagues (Care Quality Commission, CQC)** we started from the first of April 2020 with our weekly EPSO Covid-19 Taskforce sessions. After a dynamic start, the network continued as our Monthly TF C19 network meetings (1) where topics of interest to EPSO partners are presented and discussed and the latest information relevant for our partners is shared. Topics are introduced for no longer than 10-15 minutes. This way of working offers room for discussion and possible bilateral follow-up. Meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday of the month and last no longer than one hour. **This initiative has provided a much-appreciated platform for supervisory and regulatory authorities to share information and learn from each other.** The network has also provided valuable lessons for the future such as shared experiences with the use of digital healthcare and experiences with e-inspections. Our EPSO-partners can find the Agenda's and Notes etc. password protected at our website (use password epsoc19 or this link <https://epsoc-net.eu/monthly-meetings/>)

EPSO WORKING GROUPS

- **The Assisted Dying / End of Life working group** for EPSO partners, invited guests and experts in this field started its activities in November 2023 at our 43rd EPSO Monthly Meeting (1-11-23) with a presentation by its chair Becky Sherrington, Chief Executive of the Jersey Care Commission. The group met online the 31st of January 2024; the 27th of March 2024 and in-person and online in Tallinn on the 29th of May 2024. Given the sensitive nature of assisted dying and the ethical, moral, legal, and cultural differences across nations, international consensus or regulation on this matter remains challenging to achieve. In this context the group has reviewed how different countries have their own unique approaches and legal frameworks; the purpose of the group was to understand the different approaches to regulation including the benefits and challenges of different methodologies. **The group has shared its findings in 2024 in a format available to all EPSO partners.**
- **Follow up-EPSO working group on Assisted Dying / End of Life**
In view of recent developments in the field of Assisted Dying and End of Life care in France, Scotland, England, New Zealand, Jersey and The Netherlands and active

¹ N.B. Our most recent **59th EPSO TF-C19 monthly network meeting** took place on **Wednesday 6th of May 2026** via an online Teams meeting, as usual 9:00-10:00 CET; the report of the meeting is always available to our EPSO network partners -password protected (epsoc19)- on our website www.epsoc-net.eu.
For the first time this Monthly meeting had a **follow up (online)meeting with experts on Human Leadership and improvement of Leadership in a regulatory setting** The leadership session will be continued on the **20th of May 2026** to share information about inspiring leadership ideas and experiences our network partners.

interest for further participation from other EPSO partners, the idea was launched to **restart the EPSO Working group on Regulating of Assisted Dying /End of Life** at the EPSO Ireland Conference, with a new chair. Dr. Kristin Good, Chief Clinical Advisor, Regulatory Assurance (Te Pou Whakamaru) Regulation and Monitoring New Zealand. The group successfully restarted at our Jersey conference (the 17th of June 2025) and has extended its participation to become a **'peer group' open to all interested parties**. The group will meet again **in-person (and online) on the 18th of June 2026 in Malta**. The plan is to present a final report from this group at our Paris Conference in Spring 2027.

EPSO TRAINING ACTIVITIES

The EPSO Training Activities open to all EPSO Partners (until now free of charge for EPSO Partners)

- **The EPSO One Day Training (Using Data and AI in Health Supervision: From Insight to Strategy)** is organised as a pilot for a one-day training on the **15th of June 2026 in Malta**. This is an EPSO co-production between the Netherlands and Singapore (Prof. Misja Mikkers (University of Twente), asst. Prof. Kavitha Palaniappan (Duke NUS Singapore), Alex van Vorstenbosch Tilburg University and NZA- the Netherlands). They have prepared an interactive training day under the title 'From Insight to Strategy- using data and AI in Regulation and health supervision'. We have been reaching out to our EPSO partners and others to send staff and managing partners involved in decision making around the use of data and AI. We hope for a successful start of this initiative and an even more in-deep follow-up at our conference in Singapore on the 14th of October 2026.

REFLECTIONS ABOUT EPSO AND ITS FUTURE

The EPSO network has been expanding steadily, not only with the supervisory partners from our Asia-Pacific network, but also with other partners from diverse backgrounds. In addition to input from partners with a regulatory background in health and social care, EPSO is now also **collaborating with partners with a scientific and management orientation**.

In the past year, EPSO's collaboration once again extended to fruitful collaboration with **ISQua, OECD partners and WHO**. **Other new partnerships** are on their way.

Furthermore, in 2025 and 2026 it became even clearer that the topics of our conferences and our sharing of knowledge are **not only relevant to health and social care-related** regulators and inspectorates but are also of interest **for regulators from other sectors, for regulatory organisations with a broader scope such as medicine agencies and for knowledge sharing and health quality oriented organisations**.

For instance, not only Health and Social Care Inspectorates and regulators but also **medicine agencies** have been actively participating in our conferences. Topics like Preparedness for civil and military crises make it necessary to look beyond just health and social care, but also to include the production and availability of medicines for public health.

Other examples of this can be found in a wide variety of active participation, cooperation and knowledge sharing by organisations such as **the National Digital Clinical Excellence (DiCE) UK, UK's Institute of Regulation**, the knowledge sharing organisation in management and support of health and social care **VILANS**; and recently as well with the European quality assessment organisation **Qualicor** Europe and many others. As a result of these organisations participating in and collaborating with EPSO, they benefit from EPSO and we also benefit from their input.

The need for **social networks in the health and social care sectors**, as reflected in many of the best practices in integrated care, shows that cooperation with a wider scope is one of the challenges for health and social care regulators and inspectorates.

The influence of **technological developments such as AI in health and social care** has shown to be an important development for all regulators and inspectorates which has influenced the landscape of working dramatically and will continue posing challenges in the future when it comes to supervision of AI-driven processes. **Questions about leadership are highly relevant to our healthcare sector but not limited to the health and social care sector.**

These developments lead to an ongoing **reflection on the scope of EPSO** and may have implications for our organisation and the participation of relevant others in our network. **It may also lead to closer collaboration with organizations in a broader area of interest than just health and social care regulators and inspectorates**

In all these new developments, **our scientific partners**, working at universities and research organisations, play an important role. **The external scientific contacts of the EPSO network** have proven to be of great importance over the years.

The **EPSO Joint Office** has supported and co-ordinated these activities together with **EPSO advisory board members**. External assistance for reporting was organised via Erasmus University Rotterdam and Sabrina Huizinga.

For website and social network activities as well as other important organisational support of EPSO, Carry Maria Klein Gunnewiek (in cooperation with Sociallane as technical assistance) has done a wonderful job with the updates on our website <https://epso-net.eu/> and on www.linkedin.com/company/epso-net/, [Facebook](#) and [X/former twitter](#).

Our priority remains to organize with an open mind, in a pleasant and friendly way, the exchange of knowledge and experience with all partners and friends in our network aimed at **building and maintaining a useful and effective network** between our partners.

This is all financially possible thanks to the annual EPSO contributions from our EPSO partners in our network in Europe and Asia Pacific. We are highly dependent on this support. As we intend to continue collaborating with you and further strengthening our EPSO network, **we hope to receive this support again in 2026.**

Jooske Vos



Chair of the EPSO Board.

