

Cross-border access to primary angioplasty in the European Union: opportunities, challenges, recommendations

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Findings:

- › Interviewees were open to the idea of collaboration with neighbours, but also identified an ongoing need for greater collaboration within countries.
- › Formal cross-border arrangements are still missing, or not yet fully implemented.
- › Many felt that political action at national and EU level would be helpful in overcoming internal as well as cross-border barriers to collaboration.

Conclusions:

- › The EU Patients' Rights Directive in Cross-border Healthcare presents a unique opportunity to improve outcomes for acute heart attack patients not only in border areas, but also within countries, between regions.
- › With the implementation of the Directive fully underway, all stakeholders need to grasp the opportunity to make timely access to best treatment for acute heart attack patients a reality across Europe.

Objectives of the survey:

- › Review the extent of cross-border collaboration for STEMI patients
- › Look at opportunities and challenges to improving access to primary angioplasty across the EU
- › Develop recommendations to address barriers to cross-border access

Methodology:

Structured interviews with leading interventional cardiologists were carried out in 10 countries across the EU between July and September 2012.

The survey provides a **snapshot** of the current situation regarding formal cross-border arrangements for STEMI.

Based on the findings of the survey, the authors developed **policy recommendations** for healthcare providers and policymakers.

