



European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

Press Communication, 23 March 2010

Joint press release HOSPEEM – EPSU Hospital Social Partners take action to prevent sharp injuries

(Brussels, 23 March 2010) - High-level representatives of the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM) discussed today about measures to tackle labour shortages in the hospital sector. Priority will be given to the implementation of the joint EPSU-HOSPEEM Framework Agreement on the prevention of sharp injuries.

Many European countries face a human resources crisis in health. The European Social Dialogue Committee in the Hospital Sector is committed to take all action necessary to support health staff recruitment and retention.

Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, EPSU General Secretary stated:

“To stop workers leaving the sector, social partners need to make the hospital an attractive workplace. Creating a safe working-environment is key in improving the working lives of the millions of health workers in Europe. The joint EPSU-HOSPEEM framework agreement on the prevention of sharp injuries and its transposition into an EU directive will directly help to reduce workplace accidents”

Employers and trade unions in the EU-member states will now set up national action plans on the prevention of sharp injuries. HOSPEEM and EPSU expect national, regional and local authorities to cooperate closely with the national social partners in the implementation of the EU-directive.

Godfrey Perera, Secretary General of HOSPEEM stated: *“The joint framework agreement on the prevention of sharp injuries, is the first of a number of stages needed to make the healthcare sector an attractive employer. In order to meet this goal and address the shortages of trained health staff, health employers and trade unions need to work together to find solutions to the difficult problems faced by the healthcare sector. This agreement is a good example of what can be achieved when employers and trade unions work together to address difficult issues. We hope that the example we have set will be followed by national, regional and local associations and social partners working closely together to implement this important EU Directive, which will save lives and bring a greater protection to both patients and workers on the workplace”.*

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***HOSPEEM** is the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association. It regroups at European level national, regional and local employers' associations operating in the hospital and health care sector and delivering services of general interest, in order to co-ordinate their views and actions with regard to a sector and a market in constant evolution. HOSPEEM is an individual member of **CEEP**.*

***EPSU** is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the **ETUC**. 8 million public service workers from over 200 trade unions are members. They organise workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local and national administration.*