



Ageing workforce DRAFT OUTLINE

Issue

The European demographic trends show an increase number of elderly people and fewer active workers. This situation puts pressure on the labour market and on the delivery of services. Many experienced medical staff are expected to retire within the next few years. This will have implications for all healthcare employers in the EU 27. The European Commission estimates that there is going to be a shortage of one million health professionals by 2020. For this reason, it is important for the European hospital and healthcare employers to discuss policies that provide hospital managers with instruments to deal with present and future challenges. Together with an effective application at national level of the Framework of Action on recruitment and retention, which is essential to try to increase and attract a wider number of staff, specific policies can also be developed to tackle the issue of ageing workforce, for example how to best use their experience to the benefit of the organisation, taking into account that they may not be able to do what they did previously..

Background

- Item “Ageing workforce in the hospital sector” was present in the Hospital Sector work programmes since its foundation.
- A specific working group was created to deal with the issues arising on an ageing workforce.
- In 2006, HOSPEEM and EPSU, with the financial support of the European Commission, commissioned to ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd a research to chart the age profile of the hospital sector workforce in Europe to identify and to analyse initiatives within the hospital sector that have addressed the issue of ageing.
- HOSPEEM and EPSU were going to submit a proposal for a European project on the ageing workforce to the European Commission to address this issue. However, we were not able to take this work forward because both HOSPEEM and EPSU had other issues which had greater priority (e.g. the negotiation on sharp injuries).
- The Hospital Social Dialogue committee decided to drop this issue temporarily.

Main Contents

- identify the future needs of the ageing workforce;
- Make the hospital and healthcare sector an attractive environment (connections with the FoA on Recruitment and Retention): promoting working in the sector, reduction of the turnover and attracting former employees to come back to the profession;
- Training and lifelong learning to cope with future competences/skills need;
- Make the best use of the experience of an aged workforce.
- Consider how best to use the skills of the existing workforce, both young and old in a positive and constructive way.

Instrument

- HOSPEEM members believe the best way forward would be to develop a set of guidelines and best practice models.
- A project co-financed by the European Commission could still represent a good opportunity to exchange good (and bad) experiences and provide good examples to help healthcare organisations in Europe to deal with the ageing workforce. In particular the project would help to collect case-studies in the field of age management, consider the development of a handbook, arrange workshops/seminars and a conference on the topic.
- Connect our work to the initiative planned by the European Commission for the European Year 2012 on Ageing workforce;
- DG SANCO activities in the framework of the Action Plan on the Health Care Workforce

Timeline

- Dedicate the working group meetings of 16 September 2011 and 26 October 2011 to this topic;
- Constitute a HOSPEEM – EPSU drafting group, 5 people from each side.
- Write to Jean-Paul Tricart in DGEMPL informing him on our proposal and asking for financial support for the meetings of the drafting group;
- The aim is to reach an agreement by mid 2012.