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Health workforce in crisis: Healthcare professionals call on EU Parliament plenary to endorse draft report

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU), the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN), the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), and the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) welcome today's [vote](#) by the European Parliament's SANT and EMPL committees on the report "An EU health workforce crisis plan: sustainability of healthcare systems and employment and working conditions in the healthcare sector".

The long-awaited report is a stepping stone towards an urgently needed European health workforce strategy. The crisis plan urges the Commission and the Member States to address a workforce still recovering from the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic amid growing shortages of frontline healthcare professionals.

Paul De Raeve, EFN Secretary General said *"EFN appreciates the relentless support of the rapporteurs to the nursing profession to solve in an urgent and concrete way the shortages of nurses within the EU. We need concrete actions, supported by all political parties, to address the enormous shortage of nurses in the EU, and the INI report is doing so! Congratulations to all the rapporteurs and shadow rapporteurs. Now, we look forward to a positive plenary vote in July, so the Commission can move forward in translating the Parliament recommendations into legislative proposals, as we urgently need frontline implementation!"*

Dr Ole Johan Bakke, CPME President stated *"Today's vote signals a strong political recognition that the EU needs a coherent and comprehensive Health Workforce Strategy. For many years, European doctors have warned that workforce shortages create a vicious circle: poor working conditions push colleagues away from the profession, while shortages place even greater pressure on those who remain. These shortages also cause a risk for patients both for availability and quality of healthcare. European doctors welcome the commitment shown by rapporteurs and members of the SANT and EMPL committees in advancing the crisis plan, and call on the plenary to endorse this report in July."*

Jan Willem Goudriaan, EPSU General Secretary added *"Europe's healthcare workforce is sounding the alarm, and this report shows that the European Parliament is listening. It recognises the vital link between safe staffing, good working conditions and quality of care; and highlights the role of the social partners. Now the European Commission and Member States must address the public services emergency. It is time to develop and implement a comprehensive, long-term healthcare workforce strategy to tackle staff shortages, in close cooperation with trade unions. We need an action plan now!"*

Mikołaj Konstanty, PGEU President advanced “Community pharmacists see the health workforce crisis every day, amidst growing pressure on primary care. PGEU welcomes today’s vote towards a coherent EU health workforce strategy that includes community pharmacy and the provision of clinical services as an essential part of the solution. We call on the European Parliament plenary to endorse this report in July and urge the Commission and Member States to act swiftly. We need concrete measures that support recruitment and retention, improve working conditions, and ensure sustainable remuneration for pharmacy services that help keep healthcare accessible for all.”

Our organisations look forward to working with the Commission and the Member States to implement the report’s recommendations.

Notes to editors

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) is the largest European federation representing over 260 national trade unions and uniting 8 million members across the Pan-European region. The majority of EPSU’s members work in the health and social services sector. EPSU is the recognised European Social Partner in six European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committees, including those for health, hospitals, and social services. At the EU level, EPSU is a member organisation of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), and at the global level, it serves as the regional representative of Public Services International (PSI).

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) was established in 1971. The EFN represents over 38 National Nurses Associations and its work has an effect on the daily work of 3 million nurses throughout the European Union and 6 million in Europe. The EFN is the independent voice of the nursing profession, and its mission is to strengthen the status and practice of the profession of nursing for the benefit of the health of the citizens and the interests of nurses in the EU and Europe.

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession’s point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the association representing Europe’s community pharmacists, whose members are the national associations and professional bodies of community pharmacists in 33 European countries including EU Member States, EU candidate countries and EFTA members. PGEU’s mission is to promote the role of the pharmacist as key players in healthcare systems throughout Europe and to ensure that the views of the pharmacy profession are taken into account in the EU decision-making process.