



EFN-EPHA PRESS RELEASE
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EU HEALTH WORKFORCE
WHO TAKES CARE OF THOSE WHO CARE? -
PUTTING A HUMAN FACE TO EU POLICY-MAKING

Adequate and sustainable EU Workforce for Health is a crucial issue for Europe of today and of tomorrow where rapid changes in demographic, ageing population, widening health inequalities and changing disease patterns place additional challenges to the already stretched European health systems.

Health professionals – all those who care for health and well-being of European citizens on a daily basis – need to be finally given sufficient political priority. The current practice of the EU recruiting health professionals from Eastern European and developing countries to fill Western European, US, Canadian and Australian workforce gaps is unsustainable.

Key EU solutions are therefore to timely and adequately plan the workforce for health, implement effective recruitment and retention strategies and invest in Continuous Professional Development of health professionals.

“In order to give a human face to numbers and complicated PowerPoint presentations given over the last 20 years real people need to speak up and tell us their personal stories” said Paul de Raeve, Secretary General of the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN). *“If we understand the problem, why nothing is changing? This is why we need a serious political debate in the European Parliament.”* he added.

In this light and to put flesh on the bones of the reactive EU political debate so far, the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) and the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) have come together to organise a debate with support from “health-friendly” MEPs, Oana Elena Antonescu MEP (Romania, EPP), Jean Lambert MEP (UK, Greens/EFA), Marisa Matias MEP (Portugal, GUE/NGL), Marc Tarabella MEP (Belgium, S&D) and Antonia Parvanova MEP (Bulgaria, ALDE) **who understand the urgency and necessity to act now.**

“We strongly support the launch of the European Parliament Written Declaration on the EU Workforce for Health and believe it is important that MEPs, who represent European citizens take this issue forward as it affects the everyday lives

of everyone accessing healthcare”, said Archie Turnbull, President of the European Public Health Alliance. “We need this urgent initiative from the EU level that will directly consult with public health community and health professionals on the best way forward”, he added.

The event takes place this week, **on 27 October 2010 (from 1300-15.00, room A1G-2)**, in the European Parliament in Brussels.

For more information, please visit the EFN Website: www.efnweb.eu, or contact Mr. Paul de Raeve, EFN General Secretary (efn@efn.be; 0032 477 97 07 28) or Ms. Dorota Sienkiewicz, EPHA Policy Officer for Global Health (d.sienkiewicz@epha.org)

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Note to editors

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) was established in 1971. The EFN represents over 32 National Nurses Associations and its work has an effect on the daily work of 6 million nurses throughout the European Union and 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 & Europe. Visit www.efnweb.eu

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) is the European Platform bringing together public health organisations representing health professionals, patients groups, health promotion and disease specific NGOs, academic groupings and other health associations. Visit www.epha.org

