



# EFN European Election Manifesto

Representing **6 million nurses** across Europe, the European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN) represents a significant voting force. Evidence shows that “investing in an appropriate nursing workforce pays off, as it reduces mortality and increases quality of care” (Aiken, 2012). Between 2014-2019 it is vital that MEPs can ensure that this evidence is translated into a political reality within Member States and across the EU.

All EFN members are calling on:

*“MEPs to champion appropriately educated, supported and developed nursing workforce in the right numbers to deliver person-centred care and promote health in the EU”*

- ✓ **Appropriately educated:** content and competencies of nurse education must reflect modern day nursing and enhance the profession’s ability to shape and deliver effective and high quality care to patients.
- ✓ **Supported and developed:** safe, healthy and attractive working environments for nurses, with a professional lifetime guarantee of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) throughout their careers.
- ✓ **Right numbers:** In order to tackle the predicted nursing shortage across the EU by 2020 we need effective nursing workforce planning in Europe, based on skill needs, robust planning tools and transparency on appropriate staffing levels. All member states must look to take a long term approach to workforce planning, with nursing being an integral and integrated element of future health workforce planning.
- ✓ **Person centred care and health promotion:** nurses must be given the opportunity to improve access to health and prevention services. Europe needs to invest in and embrace the shift from acute to community services sharing innovation and maximising nursing’s potential to deliver person centred care.

**The EFN members are taking action:**

- Approaching MEP candidates to influence the EU’s impact on health and employment;
- Engaging with the press on significant issues MEP candidates need to address;
- Rallying members to make their vote count.

**Act now!**

For more information visit: [www.efnweb.eu](http://www.efnweb.eu) - Turn over to read our detailed call to action.

## Invest in Nursing to Save Lives!



# EFN call to action for MEP candidates

## **Invest in nursing education at European and national level**

The EFN calls on MEP candidates to use the EU's modernised Mutual Recognition on Professional Qualifications Directive to further develop nursing education curricula ensuring nurses have the right competencies to shape and deliver effective nursing care. A modernised and harmonised EU curriculum is essential to ensuring effective free movement of nurses across the EU and patient safety.

An EU Continuing Professional Development Framework must ensure the nursing workforce updates its skill and remains "fit for practice", in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, allowing nurses to easily adapt to changing needs and societal challenges. EFN is seeking MEPs support for a 'professional lifetime guarantee' of access to continuing professional development throughout a nurses' professional career, with particular support in the immediate years after qualification through "preceptorships". In this context, nurses must become active participants in the expansion and application of knowledge, on effective practice.

Only by appropriate investment in education will Europe achieve improved patient outcomes and more efficient integrated care as both are dependant on the qualifications of nurses, the largest single professional group in healthcare (*Linda Aiken, 2012*).

## **Ensure appropriate health workforce planning**

Frontline nursing will play a central part in meeting the expectations of high quality patient care in the future. But Europe's nursing workforce and population is ageing. Given that the majority of nurses are female, they often have other responsibilities throughout their careers.

In order to meet the challenges of the health system, workforce planning needs to maximise the contribution of the entire nursing workforce with appropriate data and understanding of the roles of healthcare assistants, registered nurses, specialist nurses and advanced nurse practitioners, and how they can work together and with other health professionals to improve health system. Next to this, developing robust tools to ensure appropriate staffing levels, and skill mix must become a political priority within the EU. Any strategies need to consider how to retain experienced nurses and how to make nursing an attractive and rewarding choice for future generations seeking careers which improve people's lives and are valued by society.

## **Delivering Quality and Safeguarding Patient Safety**

Representing the largest single professional group in the healthcare sector and providing the majority of direct care, nurses play a central role in the delivery and quality of care. Economic austerity has broad increased challenges for health professionals in maintaining and improving quality and safety and the European Parliament can play a key role in holding the Commission and member states to account on economic and fiscal measures which may adversely impact on safety and quality.

An EU mechanism for transparent and continuous monitoring with the aim of strengthening quality and safety in health care systems needs to be put in place, building, for example, on the EU recommendations on patient safety and on sharing experience on

cross border care in Europe. Quality measurement and outcomes need to capture better the nursing quality indicators and patient outcomes for evaluation. Exchanging knowledge and expertise must be enhanced.

The EU operates across a range of policies that impact on patients and citizens' ability to engage individually and collectively in decisions about health services. eHealth is one example. The EFN calls on MEPs to promote approaches to EU policies and legislation that support patient and public engagement in improving the quality, safety and responsiveness of health systems in Europe and that recognise the role that nurses can play in advocating for patients and in improving access.

### **Nursing Research Informing Policy Design**

Nursing research shall be recognised as a fundamental pillar in evidence based health policy making. The EFN calls for MEPs to ensure that future research programmes enhance research capacity for nursing to inform public policy and in the hope of bringing in informed political decisions based on research outcomes.

# **Invest in Nursing to Save Lives!**