



EFN PRESS RELEASE

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EU to invest in frontline health workforce!

Yesterday the United Nations High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth (HEEG) submitted its report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The report sets out a powerful, evidence-based economic case for investing in the health workforce, including 10 recommendations to advance an intersectoral agenda across the finance, labour, education, health and social sectors.

The EFN is extremely pleased with this report and especially the work undertaken by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) President, Judith Shamian, who is a Member of the Commission. This report has managed to put Health Workforce on the highest political level. For many years, the EFN has highlighted the importance of the issue to the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. Health workforce in the EU and Europe is shrinking, being cut, and neglected. Many Joint Actions have taken place, many studies have been conducted and much information is gathered. Nevertheless, frontline workforce's daily reality hasn't changes overall. The knowledge that is needed to improve the health and social care ecosystems and support healthcare professionals exist, the implementation is what is lagging behind!

It is with this in mind that the report of the HEEG Commission becomes even more important. The problems that EU Member States are facing in their health and social care systems is not particular or limited to the European continent. It is of international concern that doctors, nurses, pharmacists, (informal) carers, helping those in need, are supported.

In response to the report Dr Shamian stated: "As nurses compose over 80% of the professional workforce worldwide and as President of the International Council of Nurses, I am committed, along with the nursing profession, to being part of this agenda and emphasize the importance of engaging nurses in developing the plan of action, policies and implementation of the recommendations in this report together with all relevant stakeholders."

Paul De Raeve, EFN Secretary General commented: "the EFN strongly supports this statement and, through its daily work, advocates for more research, with an emphasis on implementation research, and better policies. Health, healthcare, and social care have to be put high on political agendas at all levels: local, national, European and international. Emphasis needs to be drawn to health and social care professionals, whether those are nurses, doctors, or other professionals. We need more financial investment in the workforce that struggles to provide quality care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!"

Finally, the EFN calls on all key stakeholders to be involved in developing an action plan, with concrete actions aiming to implement the 10 recommendations. A Summit is to be organised in December 2016 to discuss the proposed actions and the way forward.

END

For more Information:

- [HEEG Report](#) on “*Working for health and growth: investing in the health workforce*”
- [HEEG Expert Group Final Report](#)
- [Information on the Commission](#)
- EFN article [Going Beyond Archaic Metrics](#) (December 2015)
- EFN [Press Release](#) – International Nurses’ Day – EP Declaration on EU Workforce for Health (May 2010)
- EP [Written Declaration](#) on the EU Workforce for Health (40/2010)
- [Joint Action](#) on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting

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