



**European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)  
European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM)**

**Press Communication: Brussels  
Thursday, 20 September**

**European Social Partners in Hospital Sector  
hold first formal meeting  
Topics for discussion include International recruitment practices  
and hospital workforce age profile**

(For release 20 September) The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association (HOSPEEM) today met jointly in the first formal meeting of a European Sectoral Social Dialogue committee for the hospital sector.

**HOSPEEM General Secretary Godfrey Perera** stated that; *"To get to this point where representatives of the hospital workforce and management in the European Union can get together to discuss topics is a tremendous achievement. HOSPEEM is fully confident that this collaborative process will make a valuable contribution to the issues facing the hospital sector in the EU"*.

**EPSU General Secretary, Ms. Carola Fischbach-Pyttel** added that *"EPSU and HOSPEEM have identified three key areas in the hospital sector where a European approach provides added value; recruitment and retention, the age profile of workers in the sector and the new skill needs required of hospital personnel are all areas that will benefit from being tackled collectively. This process will be a cornerstone in any EU debate on the hospital sector"*.

The establishment of the committee represents the first occasion that there will be formal recognition of social partners in the hospital sector at the European level. This is an *extremely significant step* as it allows the workers and employers to have a direct formal input on EU policies affecting the hospital sector.

Over the last 5 years, as the social partners for the hospital sector at European level, EPSU and HOSPEEM have been working, with European Commission support, to formalise sectoral social dialogue at the European level. The successful agreement to establish a committee marks the end of the 'informal stage' and the beginning of genuine social partner engagement at the European level for the sector.

The social dialogue process is supported by the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission. The formal committee will consist of trade union and employer representatives from all over the 25 EU Member States.





The social partners have agreed a work programme for 2006-2007 that will concentrate on:

- Recruitment and retention of personnel in the hospital sector;
- The age profile of the hospital workforce;
- The new skill requirements for the workforce in the sector.

These items will be linked to items, which are high on the political agenda.

**If you want to arrange interviews with EPSU or HOSPEEM leadership or with delegations from one of the countries, please call EPSU press officer Brian Synnott, +32 474 98 96 75 or HOSPEEM secretariat, +32-2-2292147.**

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***EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions. It is the largest federation of the ETUC. 8 million public service workers and their 213 trade unions are members. They organise workers in health and social services, local and national administration, energy, water, waste. In the health and social services sector EPSU organises 3.5 million members***

***HOSPEEM is the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association. It regroups at European level national employers' associations operating in the hospital and health care sector and delivering services of general interest, in order to co-ordinate their views and actions with regard to a sector and a market in constant evolution. HOSPEEM is an individual member of CEEP.***