



## **Implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU on Prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector in Bulgaria**

**pharm. Slava Zlatanova, Vice-president  
Federation of Trade Unions-Health services - CITUB  
e-mail: [slava\\_z@mail.bg](mailto:slava_z@mail.bg)**



**Final Conference - BARCELONA , 20 June 2013**

**Project: "Promotion and support of the implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU on the prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector"**

# Implementation of Directive 2010/32/EU on Prevention of sharps injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector in Bulgaria

❖ The national occupational health and safety programme was drawn up in accordance with the European and national legislation. All the directives applicable to the members of the EU were incorporated in the programme.



❖ Directive 2010/32/EU is part of the national occupational health and safety programme. The institutions responsible for transposing the Directive into the national legal system are the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and the National Centre for the Protection of Public Health. The Directive should have been transposed by 15 May 2013, but there was a delay on account of the delicate political situation in Bulgaria.



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According to the Directive, a risk assessment must be carried out:

- ❖ concerning the persons exposed to risks;
- ❖ concerning the seriousness, the definition of the risks and the preventive measures, surveillance

☞ *The Directive also provides for the promotion of a 'no blame' culture which would allow instances of injuries caused by sharps to be reported without fear of punishment.*



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- ❖ It is not only the employers who are participating in the activities above, but also the medical specialists belonging to the working committees in each hospital. The entire team of each medical establishment must take part in the risk assessment.
- ❖ The employer prepares an action plan in the event of sharps injuries.
- ❖ The employer's role must not be confined merely to providing medical treatment for the injured person, but must also identify the best preventive measures. It should never be assumed that there are no risks.



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- ❖ Employers and union representatives will have to work together to create a safe working environment. An integral strategy must be drawn up which includes preventive safety procedures, the correct use of containers and instruments which prick and cut and the actions to be taken in case of injury, including the obligation to notify the employer immediately, to place the injured person under medical observation and to take care of his rehabilitation.
- ❖ The preventive measures also include effective immunisation free of charge for workers and trainees. In our hospitals, safety at work is the responsibility of the employer and the representatives of the working conditions committee.
- ❖ In accordance with the Directive, effective preventive and safety measures of each workplace in the health sector are ensured by awareness-raising actions, consultation and collective agreements.



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It is important to note that:

❖ the hard work by the trade unions in Bulgaria is reinforced by our excellent cooperation with the nurses' professional association and the healthcare employers' association. In 2012, we jointly organised a series of conferences entitled 'Occupational health and safety in the healthcare sector: awareness-raising, protection and surveillance to assist the victims of sharps injuries'.



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- ❖ The committee responsible for transposing Directive 2010/32/EU continues its work under the Ministry of Health.
- ❖ Under the vigilant eye of the trade unions, the nurses' professional association and the institutions in charge continue their work to synchronise the national legal system with the Directive. Changes are under way in the legislation on nosocomial infections, in relation to which the standards laid down by the Directive are of particular importance. The Ministry of Health has proposed to the trade unions that they should give their recommendations for the legislation. We naturally did so, as experts giving our opinion for the benefit of the workers in the sector, including our union members.



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❖ Injuries among medical staff represent a significant financial burden for the health system and for society in general. There is a need to convince the employers of the need to provide medical equipment in the hospitals, integrating protective mechanisms, containers to dispose of contaminated instruments and materials, and appropriate protective clothing.

☞ *At a time of crisis and in view of the limited budgets of the hospitals, economies are made and certain employers do not bother to provide protective equipment. This is why the control carried out by the working committees is effective and timely, as one of the principal aims of our unions is to keep an eye on the health and safety of all workers in the healthcare system.*







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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!**

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