

**Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital Sector
EU-OSHA Campaign 2020-22 Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load
Joint Press Release**

(12 October 2020) The EU-level Sectoral Social Partners for the Hospital Sector (SSDC HS), the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association ([HOSPEEM](#)) and the European Federation of Public Service Unions ([EPSU](#)) applied to become official campaign partner of the [EU-OSHA Campaign 2020-22 Healthy Workplaces Lighten the Load](#).

Marta Branca, Vice-Secretary General of HOSPEEM, said: “Sustainable participation of all health professionals is the most direct contribution to dealing with potential workforce-related issues. HOSPEEM will continue to promote the creation and maintenance of the safest possible workplaces and to promote active participation in continuing professional development (CPD) and life-long learning (LLL) for all health professionals. Ergonomic design is needed to improve healthcare facilities and to overcome the possible future decline in numbers of healthcare workers. I am convinced that our work and initiatives in the field of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in the framework of the EU SSDC HS will lead to safer and healthier workplaces across Europe.”

Jan-Willem Goudriaan, General Secretary of EPSU, stressed that “MSDs are by far the most common work-related health problem among European workers. The social and economic consequences of this are now becoming abundantly clear. Millions of workers are no longer able to do certain tasks or even have to stop work altogether before retirement age. EPSU is strongly convinced that the wellbeing at work is a fundamental right, and we are ready to cooperate with employers to ensure it.”

Recent European statistics underline the need to address prevention of MSD in the health sector: The [2019 European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks](#) showed that 59% establishments in the sector reported existing risk factors such as painful positions and 54% lifting or moving people or heavy loads. These findings are supported by results from the [6th European Working Conditions Survey](#), which highlighted that 47% of respondents working in the sector reported backache in the past 12 months.

To keep MSD high on the European and national agenda, coordinated responses from social partners are needed that are also in line with the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), the EU's [Framework Directive on OSH](#) and the [EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work](#). Next to becoming official campaign partners, we set out to:

- 1.) Update the existing [HOSPEEM-EPSU Framework of Actions on Recruitment and Retention](#) (2010);
- 2.) Continue the discussion among European social partners to exchange good practices and strategies in the field of MSD;
- 3.) Continue to exchange on the relevance of the current regulatory framework on MSD at European level.

Throughout the years, [HOSPEEM](#) and EPSU have considered MSD of great importance in the health sector, e.g. by carrying out a project on MSDs and psycho-social risks and stress at work. The cooperation of employers and trade unions is fundamental in successfully managing and preventing MSDs.