

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital and Healthcare Sector Main activities and outcomes in 2020

In 2020 the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Hospital and Healthcare Sector (SSDC HS) started their work in the newly adopted EPSU-HOSPEEM Joint Work Programme 2020 – 2020. Due to COVID-19, the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee paid particular attention to Occupational Safety and Health.

Occupational Safety and Health

On 19 February 2020, the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee presented the implementation report on the medical sharps directive (2010/32/EU) at the Senior Labour Inspectorate Committee Working Group for strategic management and enforcement. It was the opportunity to discuss the role of labour inspectors and cooperation with social partners to ensure appropriate implementation of the directive at the national level. Additionally, the Secretariats presented the report at the webinar on preventing sharps injuries organised by the Belgian federation of technological medical industries. The Secretariats reached out to the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) to discuss the report and to explore joint initiatives. As the first initiative, the medical sharps thematic page has been updated with the latest available information.

Together with other signatories, HOSPEEM and EPSU reaffirmed their commitment to the Multi-sectoral guidelines to tackle third-party violence and harassment related to work in July. This effort has been picked up by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) who referenced the Guidelines in their [Report on Safe and healthy working environments free from violence and harassment](#). Additionally, on 03 February, the Secretariats presented the Guidelines at the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Industrial Cleaning.

The SSDC HS discussed the fourth revision of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (CMD) by contributing to the study and subsequent report on “supporting the assessment of different options concerning the protection of workers from exposure to hazardous medicinal products, including cytotoxic medicinal products”. EPSU and HOSPEEM also agreed on a joint position paper to support the inclusion of hazardous medical products, including cytotoxic drugs as a category in Appendix I of the CMD, which was presented at a stakeholder conference in September.

HOSPEEM and EPSU joined the EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaign “Lighten the Load” to raise awareness of crucial occupational safety and health issues in particular on Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD). On 12 October and in light of the campaign launch, HOSPEEM and EPSU sent out a press release to announce their support for the campaign.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, EPSU and HOSPEEM liaised with the relevant European institutions, in particular with the European Commission, to receive the latest information available, given the massive impact of the pandemic on the sector and the health workforce. The European Sectoral Social Partners sent a joint letter to the European Commissioner Stella Kyriakides and MEP Christian Busoi, rapporteur of the EU4Health Programme.

In July, the EPSU Standing Committee for Health Services and the HOSPEEM Steering Committee exchanged on initial lessons’ learnt and agreed on a roadmap to update the Work Programme 2020-2022.

Continuous professional development (CPD)

The collection of good practices on CPD and Lifelong Learning was finalised in early 2020. A joint report to the ILO is expected for 2021.

“Strengthening social dialogue in the hospital sector in the East, South and Central Europe” (2019-2020)

Following a joint request, the European Commission granted an extension to the project to the end of 2021.