



ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS DES HÔPITAUX
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS
EUROPÄISCHE VEREINIGUNG DER LEITENDEN KRANKENHAUSÄRZTE
EUROPESE VERENIGING VAN STAFARTSEN
DEN EUROPÆISKE OVERLÆGEFORENING
ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟΣ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ ΝΟΣΟΚΟΜΕΙΑΚΩΝ ΙΑΤΡΩΝ ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΩΝ
ASSOCIAZIONE EUROPEA DEI MEDICI OSPEDALIERI
DEN EUROPEISKE OVERLEGEFORENING
ASSOCIAÇÃO EUROPEIA DOS MÉDICOS HOSPITALARES
ASOCIACIÓN EUROPEA DE MÉDICOS DE HOSPITALES
EUROPEISKA ÖVERLÄKARFÖRENINGEN
EVROPSKO ZDRŽENJE BOLNIŠNIČNIH ZDRAVINIKOV
EUROPSKA ASOCIACIA NEMOCNICNÝCH LEKAROV
EUROPSKA UDRUGA BOLNIČKI LIJEČNIKA
ЕВРОПЕЙСКА АСОЦИАЦИЯ НА СТАРШИТЕ БОЛНИЧНИ ЛЕКАРИ
ASOCIATIA EUROPEANA A MEDICILOR DIN SPITALE

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Request for support of FEMS to Portuguese doctors

Labor situation in Portugal

Dear Mr. President,

Portuguese Doctors were forced to the hardest constitutional form to fight and protest, strike, 11 and 12th of July by a Government and a Ministry of Health who act with deliberate bad faith, opening contest for piecework, in providing services, 2.5 million hours / year, equivalent to the work of 1700 doctors and spent six months negotiating without presenting any specific proposal;

Portuguese Doctors:

1. Do not accept the run-out of the National Health Service, the decrease of quality in medical practice and in medical training and the fatal blow on medical career made worse by this auction by the lowest price of 2.5 million hours / year;
2. Do not accept measures which tend to deteriorate the quality of health care, adding difficulties in access to health care by the Portuguese;
3. Do not accept the degradation of doctors' working conditions as a result of a liberal policy in the management of health units, which removes the most experienced and capable, creating difficulties in continuous professional development, pre-and post-graduate education, and that disqualifies the research, contributing to a decline in quality;
4. Do not accept that the Heads of Department are carried out by elements other than Senior Physicians;
5. Do not accept the permanent remuneratory difficulties and injustices they face to apply to Public Services, making them sensitive to private appeals;
6. Do not accept that the economic crisis, financial, social and especially political and moral values, could stop the implementation of collective bargaining, including the inexistence of degree assessment in medical career and the absence of salary scale;
7. Do not accept the devaluation imposed on the value of work, wages down, cutting salaries and increasing taxes;
8. Do not accept the maintenance of a remuneratory system based on low salaries and the implementation of mandatory overtime;

9. Do not accept administrative and illegal increase in the number of patients per family physician, reducing quality of care;
10. Will never accept that medical students could be seen only as future cheap manpower, neglecting their medical training.

We would be grateful if you could support the activities of the Medical Trade Unions, SIM and FNAM, and the Portuguese Medical Chamber in enforcing their demands.

Please address your correspondences to:

Mr. Pedro Passos Coelho
Prime Minister of Portugal
Adress: gabinete.sepcm@pcm.gov.pt

and to

Mr. Paulo Macedo
Minister of Health
Adress: elisabete.oliveira@ms.gov.pt

Kind regards,

A President of SMZN/FNAM
Merlinde Madureira

Secretary General of SIM
Jorge Roque da Cunha





ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS DES HÔPITAUX
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS

Mr Pedro Passos Coelho
Prime Minister of Portugal

Brussels, 3 July 2012

Dear Prime Minister,

The AEMH - European Association of Senior Hospital Physicians has been alerted on the recent development in the public healthcare sector in Portugal and is deeply concerned.

We know that health is always a good target for saving cost measures but we must, by all means, fight for quality of care and patients safety.

AEMH is concerned with the 2.5 million hours of medical services given to external companies for the lowest price. The contracts with these companies carry a high risk to patients safety including:

- making it more difficult to control and verify doctors' professional qualifications (European Directive on Professional Qualifications)
 - allowing the same doctors to work consecutive days in different hospitals in emergency services not respecting the periods of rest (European Working Time Directive),
- and leads to:
- disruption of Medical Departments
 - end of teamwork
 - hierarchical disorganization
 - reduced availability of senior doctors to train junior doctors.

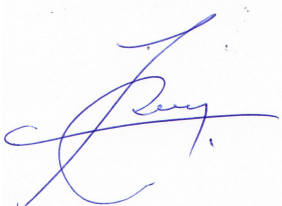
We hereby express our support to our Portuguese colleagues and their claim to perform their tasks in full respect of medical careers (the only way for quality assurance) as well as their fight for good working conditions and adequate remuneration.

Throughout Europe we all know that poorly paid work, non-specialized doctors doing specialized tasks, cheap manpower in health services and quantity instead of quality indicators only leads to an increasing risk for patients' safety.

Best quality healthcare and patients' safety are the core values of European hospital physicians and we are convinced that you share these values.

Therefore, we trust that you will open wide consultation with the professional medical organisations in order to achieve together a stabilization of health care in Portugal.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. João de Deus
AEMH-President



**ASSOCIATION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS DES HÔPITAUX
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS**

Mr Paulo Macedo
Minister of Health of Portugal

Brussels, 3 July 2012

Dear Minister,

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We know that health is always a good target for saving cost measures but we must, by all means, fight for quality of care and patients safety.

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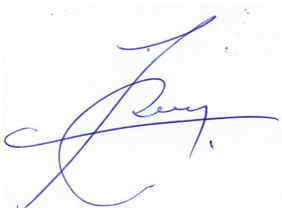
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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Deus', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. João de Deus
AEMH-President



Mr. João de Deus
AEMH President
European Association of Senior
Hospital Physicians
Rue Guimard 15
B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

Lisbon, July 13, 2012

On behalf of H.E. the Minister for Health of Portugal, Dr. Paulo Moita de Macedo, I thank you for your letter and I have the pleasure to inform you about some issues of our health policy.

The main concern of the Portuguese Government's health policy is to preserve the high quality universal SNS (the National Health System) the Portuguese have benefited from in the last 30 years. Given the shortage of doctors in some specialties and geographic areas, the SNS has needed to procure medical services on an hourly basis. This is not a new instrument, since hospitals have been celebrating these contracts for many years.

The Portuguese Government believes the procurement of medical services on an hourly basis should remain an exceptional instrument restricted to situations where all mechanisms of mobility provided by law have been exhausted, and where there is an urgent need of these professionals to ensure continuity of service.

Public Tender 2012/102 does not alter this regime of exceptionality. Even though this is a national tender, the actual contracting of services will be executed at hospital (and other SNS institutions) level and only if there is prior authorization by the Ministry of Health. This authorization will only be granted when the procurement of medical services on an hourly basis is the only mechanism available to ensure SNS institutions continue to operate without disturbances.



The tender in question already had strong guarantees to ensure the safety and quality of services provided. Nevertheless, the Government recently introduced some changes to the tender program and its specifications, in order to make them clearer. One of the changes introduced is the express provision that the decision on the most qualified professional will be based on a score where the criteria related to doctor's qualifications and clinical skills necessary for the services being procured have a weight of 50% (the other 50% relate to price criteria).

Additionally, the Ministry of Health is committed to ensure that the actual contracting of services by SNS institutions meet quality criteria set jointly with the organizations of physicians.

Finally, this tender continues the effort to control and rationalize the use of procurement of medical services on an hourly basis in the SNS. In 2011, 2.2 million hours were procured in the SNS under this mechanism, already down from 2.4 million hours in 2010. Under Public Tender 2012/102, only 1.98 million hours will be procured for the next 12 months, and the Government plans to reduce this number further, replacing this form of service provision by full time professionals, as they become available.

Best regards

Head of Staff Minister of Health

Luís Vitório