



CPME's views on the workforce shortages and task shifting

Dr Christiaan Keijzer, *President*

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A woman in blue scrubs is sitting on the floor in a hospital hallway, looking up. The hallway is busy with other healthcare workers in white coats and blue scrubs, some of whom are blurred due to motion. The scene is lit with warm, indoor lighting, and the floor is a dark, polished material. The overall atmosphere is one of a busy, active medical environment.

CPME Survey during the
pandemic



CPME survey findings





CPME Policy on Health workforce



PRESS RELEASE

10 March 2023, Brussels

Violence against healthcare professionals: a rising threat to the health workforce and patient care

Violence against healthcare professionals is increasing at an alarming rate across Europe. On Sunday 12 March we mark the 4th European Awareness Day of Violence Against Doctors and other Healthcare Professionals to raise attention and catalyse action.

The World Health Organization reports that up to 38% of healthcare professionals suffer physical violence at some point in their careers, and many more are exposed to verbal and online abuse. Such aggression can have devastating consequences, including physical injuries, impacts on mental health, and in the most extreme cases even death.

Violence and abuse also coexist with burnout, a growing factor in professionals choosing to leave the health sector altogether. This interacts with unsafe working conditions, health workforce shortages and the effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

CPME President Dr Christiaan Keijzer said "We need to recognise the impact of violence on healthcare professionals, which in the end affects not only the workforce but patient care. It is critical to promote a culture of respect for healthcare professionals, and provide resources to report and support incidences when violence occurs.

"The health workforce is already in crisis. We call for policymakers and the general public to help keep healthcare professionals safe. We also urge the European Commission to support governments by providing benchmarks for minimum workforce capacities and address healthcare professionals in the upcoming comprehensive approach to mental health."

We are committed to continuing our work with European Medical Organisations and partners in the health community to raise awareness for this important topic.

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.



EUROPEAN MEDICAL ORGANISATIONS' JOINT STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE AGAINST DOCTORS AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The right to health is a fundamental pillar of human rights. It remains applicable in all circumstances and doctors have an ethical duty to ensure they treat the injured and sick.

European Medical Organisations reaffirm that physician safety at work is the basis of quality healthcare. European as well as international medical organisations observe that doctors and other health professionals, working in hospitals, general and private practice, are increasingly confronted with situations of violence, sometimes extreme, in their daily practice, outside any context of conflict.

European Medical Organisations are concerned that this worrying trend is contrary to international human rights and medical ethics. It may hinder or prevent the provision of care that must be protected as effectively as possible. It is urgent and capital to take concrete and urgent actions to protect European doctors from all forms of violence that occur during daily medical practice, be it physical, verbal and/or psychological. European Medical Organisations recognise the hugely negative impact violence has on the socio-psychological wellbeing of doctors and other health professionals, the care received by patients and its contribution to rising levels of burnout experienced by the health workers in their workplace.

European Medical Organisations call on governments and all stakeholders to show political commitment and to be aware of the urgent need to protect medical personnel in the performance of their work. We ask for the establishment of an effective reporting and assisting mechanism for victims across Europe, for the implementation of violence prevention programmes and for the enforcement of existing laws concerning violence against doctors and other health professionals in the workplace. We ask them to take all necessary measures to ensure access to quality care for all patients while protecting the freedom and safety of medical personnel and healthcare facilities.

European Medical Organisations commit to cooperating closely in the framework of the EMDs Joint Working group on violence against doctors and other health professionals under CEOM leadership, to ensure that the European medical profession is acting as one.

Dr Erich Theo Mehlert, President of AEMH (European Association of Senior Hospital Physicians), Dr José Santos, President of the CEOM (European Council of Medical Doctors), Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich-Montgomery, President of the CPME (Standing Committee of European Doctors), Mr Nikolaos C. Kiliadis, President of EMSA (European Medical Students Association), Mr Mathias Kömer, President of the EJD (European Junior Doctors Association), Dr Joan De Dios, President of the UEMS (European Federation of General Practitioners), Dr Catrin Burnstulst, President of the UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists), and Prof. Vasilios Papadakis, President of the UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists).

CPME Policy on Health workforce

EMO's Joint Statement on Violence against doctors and other health care professionals



CPME Policy
Recommendations



CPME Recommendations on Workforce Shortages

- Health workforce planning must aim to achieve conditions for professional practice which improve quality of care and patient safety and ensure the accessibility. National medical association should be involved.
- A shortage is not a justified reason to lower qualifications and training standards.
- Recruitment from abroad should not be regarded as a simple tool to mitigate shortages. Every national health system must be sufficiently robust to educate and train an adequate number of health professionals to meet the future needs.
- Member States must implement ethical recruitment policies in line with the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.
- The European Commission should support governments by providing benchmarks for minimum workforce capacities.



CPME Recommendations on Recruitment and Retention

- Quality learning with adequate time and resources
- Adequate research resources
- Promoting work–life balance through flexible job options
- New economic and organizational models for free practice settings
- Internships in remote family medicine practices for medical students to encourage working in rural areas
- Financial incentives for doctors in underserved regions as a positive incentive
- Positive practice environments promoting doctor well–being and support services
- Fair and transparent recruitment and promotion processes, free of discrimination



CPME Recommendations on Task Shifting

- EMOs' Joint Statement on the Role of the Doctor:
"European Medical Organisations stress the importance of the central role of medical doctors in the diagnosis, treatment, and coordination of multidisciplinary care."
- CPME Policy on Task-Shifting :
"Patient safety, quality, and continuity of care should be the underlying objective of healthcare organization and reforms. Therefore, task-shifting should only occur through consultation and in accordance with the medical profession, not solely as a cost-saving measure. However, when used correctly, the shift of some tasks may enable better use of manpower and resources."



European policy context and
what could the EU do?

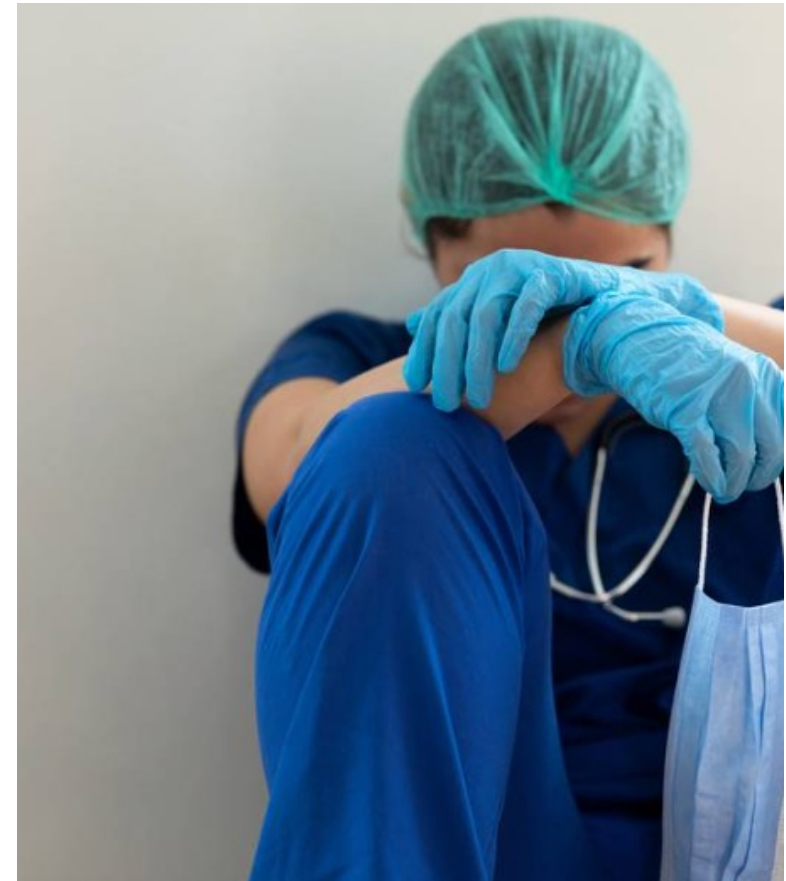
CPME Key Messages on Workforce Shortages



- The health workforce is the lifeblood of the health system. The lack of health professionals is the biggest challenge.
- There is a lack of effective action to tackle the underlying fragilities in health systems.
- The shortages are making medicine less attractive as a lifelong professional calling.

What is the current European policy context?

- In April 2023, Green MEPs wrote an open letter to the Head of States regarding the shortage of healthcare workers, highlighting the severity of the issue and the urgent need for political action. This indicates that the matter has become a significant political concern.
- The European Commission's HEROES Joint Action is aimed at improving the HWF planning capacities of European countries so to ensure accessibility, sustainability, and resilience of healthcare services.





World Health Organization Bucharest Declaration.

1. Improve the recruitment and retention of health and care workers
2. Improve health workforce supply mechanisms
3. Optimize the performance of the health and care workforce
4. Better plan the health and care workforce
5. Increase public investment in workforce education, development and protection



Support better health
workforce planning

Monitor working
conditions

Benchmarks for
minimum
capacities

Investment

Many thanks for your attention!

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