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General Guidelines for internal EPSU communication, to be used by the Health and Social Services Standing Committee in the context of the European hospital sector social dialogue

1 Representation in social dialogue bodies

- a) According to Paragraph III, no. 4 of Appendix VIII to the EPSU Constitution, the EPSU delegation of the hospital sector Social Dialogue Committee (SDC) will be composed of members of the Health and Social Services (HSS) Standing Committee. In so far as possible the delegation will include a representative of all EU member states.
- b) The EPSU delegation to the Social Dialogue Steering Group will consist of the President, the Vice-Presidents and a representative of the EPSU secretariat.
- c) The EPSU delegation in the ad-hoc working groups will be nominated by the Standing Committee, ensuring a proper balance between expertise on the subject, regions, women and men. The delegation will include a representative from the EPSU secretariat. The Standing Committee can decide to run its nomination procedure on the basis of EPSU regional constituencies. Working group members needn't necessarily be the same persons as the SDC members.

2 Health and Social Services Standing Committee

- a) The EPSU trade union delegations in the SDC, Steering Group and ad hoc working groups work under the remit of the EPSU HSS Standing Committee. Their proposals or reactions to employers' proposals therefore have to reflect the Standing Committee decisions, views and ideas. The Standing Committee takes the decision based on general adopted EPSU policy and the EPSU programme of priorities.
- b) Members of the Social Dialogue bodies are expected to inform and involve on a regular basis the Standing Committee Members and affiliates they represent.
- c) The members of the ad hoc working groups need to report back to the Standing Committee President and Vice-Presidents. The (Vice-) Presidents will decide together with the ad-hoc working group delegation when to call for input/decision by Standing Committee Members.
- d) Before submitting the final draft proposals and papers to the SDC for endorsement, approval or recommendation EPSU health care affiliates will be given the possibility to inform the Standing Committee through the secretariat on their opinions regarding these texts.
- e) It is the intention to prepare the SDC meetings in the HSS Standing Committee. If the Standing Committee is due to time constraints not able to discuss the proposals in its own meetings, the preparatory discussions can be held in the trade union delegation meetings before the plenary SDC meetings. Standing Committee members, who are not delegates (deputies) in the SDC, will be invited to participate in these preparatory meetings.

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- f) In the event of time constraints (for instance in the case of EC consultation procedures) the President and Vice-Presidents can decide to initiate a Standing Committee consultation procedure in writing. In so far as possible preparations of this consultation-procedure will be made by the EPSU delegates of the ad-hoc working group with the assistance of the secretariat.
- g) The Executive Committee will decide on the final results of the social dialogue negotiations. In order to prepare this decision-making procedure the Standing Committee will forward a recommendation to adopt or reject the result. In the event of time constraints the Steering Committee is mandated to approve the recommendation of the Standing Committee (If necessary, this can be done through a procedure in writing).

3 EPSU secretariat

- a) All EPSU affiliates in the health sector will receive from the EPSU secretariat a copy of the meeting documents, minutes and debrief notes of the Social Dialogue Committee, the steering group and the working groups, In addition to this, they will receive a copy of all formal correspondence between the European Commission (EC) and the European social partners, concerning the Hospital Sector Social Dialogue.
- b) All EPSU affiliates can send information or suggestions concerning the Social Dialogue and its areas of work to the EPSU secretariat. They can also send their comments on draft proposals and papers. This will be regarded as an informal procedure to improve the quality of policy development.
- c) The EPSU secretariat will be dealing with the management of daily affairs, which includes among others arranging meetings and preparing documents in cooperation with HOSPEEM, liaising with the European Commission, and coordinating the EPSU nomination procedures.

4 Role of Experts

- a) It is the intention of EPSU to make use of the knowledge and experience of trade union specialists and other experts in the European social dialogue. This means that the EPSU delegations will make an effort to appoint specific national and European experts to working group meetings, or other social dialogue meetings. The role of the expert during those meetings is to give information on specific issues and to provide the Social Partners with recommendations for future policies and actions in the hospital sector social dialogue. Experts are not involved in any decision-making processes and can therefore not participate in negotiations or formal discussions.
- b) The appointment of experts to social dialogue meetings needs to be approved by HOSPEEM. EPSU delegations therefore can propose their experts, but the decision to appoint them has to be made by the SDC or working groups respectively.

5 Reimbursement of travel costs and accommodation

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Reimbursement, travel or accommodation facilities for social dialogue meetings are regulated by the European Commission. EPSU cannot be held responsible for the outcomes of these regulations.

6 Cooperation with other organisations

- a) The HSS Standing Committee can decide to involve other organisations in the preparations of the Social Dialogue issues. Those organisations will not take part in any decision-making procedures, but can give their opinion on certain issues.
- b) Any contacts with those organisations will be directed by the President and Vice-Presidents with the assistance of the EPSU secretariat. The President, Vice-Presidents or secretariat will report back on the meetings and other contacts with those organisations to the Standing Committee.

7 Evaluation and Review

Practical experience within the hospital sector Social Dialogue will be used by the Standing Committee to evaluate and review these guidelines.