



Commissioner Vladimir Špidla
European Commission
Rue de la Loi, 200
B – 1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, Friday 14 October 2005

Concern: EFN input to the consultation process on ageing and mobility in the EU

Dear Commissioner,

The European Federation of Nurses Associations (EFN), former Standing Committee of Nurses (PCN), represents more than 6 million nurses in the wider Europe and appreciates the input to the consultation process on two very important issues for the nursing profession: the active ageing in the European population and the mobility of the nursing workforce.

In our last General Assembly, EFN members endorsed a position statement on ‘EU challenges for long-term Care’ (see attachment) which is officially launched today and can be considered as input to your consultation process. Nurses provide 80% of direct patient care and it is essential, when designing new policy in the social and health area, to include nurses and nursing to obtain a full picture of care. Nurses also play a pivotal role in initiating change in practice, close to the European Citizens.

Concerning your second priority, EFN fully supports free movement of nurses and the rights of the individual to make free choices. However, EFN is seriously concerned about the unethical practices by some recruitment agencies and the possible exploitation of migrant workers. Therefore, EFN produced a Good Practice Guidance for International Nurse Recruitment (see attachment), which was submitted to the European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, Mr David Byrne, in May 2004. EFN believes that consideration must be given to the effects of massive recruitment in the countries of origin, which risk being deprived of their most valuable nursing resources, having an effect on patient outcomes and patient safety.

European nurses ask for your personal commitment in order to meet these challenges and to guarantee the compatibility between European social policy and the free market principles.

If EFN can be of any assistance in achieving your political agenda, we are more than happy to support you in any aspect.

Yours Sincerely,



Paul de Raeve
EFN General Secretary