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Mrs. Dominique Leboeuf is elected as the first President of the National Council of the French Regulatory Body for Nursing

On this Wednesday 14th of January, Mrs. Dominique Leboeuf was elected as the first President of the National Council of the French Regulatory Body for Nursing (Conseil National de l'Ordre Infirmier - CNOI). The election took place in the premises of the French Ministry of Health in Paris.

Mrs. Dominique Leboeuf, 47, is nursing manager in the Hospital Centre of Versailles, Paris and also holds the position of Secretary General of the Local Council of the Yvelines and of Vice-President of the Regional Council of Ile-de-France. She was elected with more than 80% of the votes

Following the election of the President, the electors have preceded to a vote for the others members constituting the National Council. CNOI is in fact composed of 9 members, of which 3 Vice-Presidents (one for each sector (liberal, public and private)), 1 Secretary General (and 2 Deputies), 1 Treasurer (and 1 Deputy). Of these 9 members, 4 are coming from the public sector, 4 from the private and 1 from the liberal.

The National Council is now going to hold its first regular meeting in February, in order to begin the implementation of the numerous projects the French Regulatory Body for Nursing has voted to undertake within this year.

FEPI will of course keep you updated on the future evolutions regarding the French Regulatory Body for Nursing and our Secretariat has already written to congratulate the newly elected President, expressing Prof. Sasso's wish that she would soon closely collaborate with FEPI.

Communication of the European Commission on 'Patient Safety, including prevention and control of healthcare related infections'

As we have already informed you, the 15th of last December, the European Commission has published an important Communication on 'Patient Safety, including prevention and control of healthcare related infections'. This Communication has been followed by a recommendation for a proposal of the Council on the same issue.

In this document, the European Commission states that *'patient safety is an issue of increasing concern in healthcare systems all over the world'*. According to national studies in some 'big' countries of the EU (France, the UK and Spain) and on the basis of several interviews with stakeholders, *'it is estimated that, in the EU, between 8% and 12% of patients admitted to hospitals suffer from adverse effects while receiving healthcare'*. For the European Commission, *'HCAs (Healthcare Associated Infections) are among the most frequent and potentially harmful causes of unintended harm, affecting an estimated one in twenty hospital patients on average, corresponding to 4.1 million patients every year in the EU'*.

The initiative from the European Commission intends to foster political commitment by Member States to make patient safety a priority in national public health objectives, as well as for the EU to play a role in collecting comparable and aggregate data at Community level and in disseminating best practices among the Member States to establish efficient and transparent patient safety programmes, structures and policies.

According to the European Commission, *'the objective of this initiative is to protect EU citizens from preventable harm in healthcare by supporting Member States to put in place adequate strategies to prevent and control adverse events in healthcare, including healthcare associated infections, and to improve EU citizens' confidence that they have sufficient, comprehensive and comprehensible information on safety and available redress in EU health systems. This initiative on patient safety is intended to create a framework to stimulate policy development and future action in, and between, Member States to address the key patient safety issues and problems confronting the EU'*.

The European Commission also reminds that, according to Article 152 of the Treaty, it is for the Member States to decide on the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care.

In this Communication, the European Commissions recommends the Member States to:

- 1) ***Support the establishment and development of national policies and programmes on patient safety in general terms,***

- 2) **Inform and empower patients by involving them in the patient safety policy process, by informing them of levels of safety and, if things go wrong, how they can find accessible and comprehensible information on complaints and redress systems,**
- 3) **Set up or improve comprehensive blame-free reporting and learning systems so that the extent and type and causes of adverse events are captured to enable resources to be efficiently channelled into developing solutions and interventions which can then be shared at the EU level. Such reporting on adverse events should be done in a constructive, rather than a punitive or repressive, manner so that healthcare providers feel confident that they can report without fear of negative consequences,**
- 4) **Ensure that patient safety is embedded into the education and training of healthcare workers, as the providers of care.**

On the other side, the European Commission underlines that, at the EU level, itself, in close collaboration with Member States, should:

- 1) **Take the necessary initiatives to develop common definitions, terminology and indicators on patient safety. This action should build on the work undertaken by international bodies such as the WHO, the OECD and the Council of Europe and exploit, where appropriate, the results of relevant research projects at the EU level. Agreed indicators should also be developed for public reporting of safety levels.**
- 2) **Facilitate sharing information and best practice on patient safety, including on the prevention and control of HCAs. Sharing major patient safety alerts should also be possible at the EU level.**
- 3) **Continue promoting European research programmes on patient safety particularly focusing on filling the current research gaps and on complementing existing research on national level.**
- 4) **Consider how best to achieve and sustain effective collaboration on patient safety between Member States in the longer term.**

Finally, in order to facilitate the coherent implementation of the recommended actions the European Commission will, where necessary, develop guidelines in close cooperation with Member States, including on the prevention and exposure of healthcare workers to healthcare associated pathogens.

It is evident that this Communication from the European Commission is of exceedingly importance for our profession in particular and for the entire healthcare sector in general. It shows the will of the European Commission to undertake concrete actions to better ensure the safety of the patients, but also the safety of the professionals. We are aware that some of our members have already taken a number of positive initiatives towards this sense. Our Policy Working Group meeting in London next week is an excellent opportunity to plan our next steps.

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<i>Meetings and Events to come:</i>
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- 20/01/09:
 - FEPI Policy Working Group
 - 21 Portland Place, London
 - 09.00 to 14.00

- 21/01/09:
 - European Parliament Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) Committee Meeting
 - European Parliament, PHS 1A02, Brussels
 - 09.00
 - FEPI Delegation: Mr. Laurent Louette

- 22/01/09:
 - European Health Management Association (EHMA) Roundtable on Patient Safety
 - Local Government Association premises, Square de Mêleus, 1, B-1000 Brussels
 - 12.15 to 14.30
 - FEPI Delegation: Mr. Laurent Louette
 - <http://www.ehma.org/index.php?q=node/145>

- 22/01/09:
 - CEPLIS Services Working Group
 - Liaison Committee of the European Surveyors (CLGE), 40 Avenue Hoche, F- 75008 Paris
 - 09.30-16.00