Healthcare professionals urge authorities to guarantee protection to those in front lines against Covid-19

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(Brussels) The European health professionals and their students' organisations are calling on the European Commission and the governments to support and protect healthcare professionals fighting Covid-19. Staff must be provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and must be regularly tested, regardless of reported symptoms or exposure.

As Europe has become the global center of the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare professionals are working hard to contain the spread of the virus, putting themselves at risk to protect the communities. Despite the unprecedented efforts to stop the pandemic, healthcare professionals are at the front line without adequate PPE. The number of infections and deaths of the healthcare staff is increasing every

day.

Even in times of crisis, adequate working conditions must be ensured. Staff must have breaks and time off between shifts, to be able to carry on in what could be a long-term global crisis. The working time Directive should apply. Working in such conditions takes its toll on the psychological health of staff, so appropriate support services must also be put in place.

European healthcare professional organisations call on the European Commission to open a permanent line of communication with European health professionals to share experience and best practice across Europe and to ensure that the Commission's own support measures focus on operational priorities on the ground.

The list of the organisations signing the statement:

- *AEMH* - European Association for Senior Hospital Physicians
- *CED* - Council of European Dentists
- *CEOM* - European Council of Medical Orders – CEOM
- *CPME* - Standing Committee of European Doctors
- *EAHP* - European Association of Hospital Pharmacists
- *EFN* - European Federation of Nurses Associations
- *EJD* - European Junior Doctors
- *EMA* - European Midwives Association
- *EPSU* - European Federation of Public Service Unions
- *ERS* - European respiratory Society
- *FEMS* - European Federation of Salaried Doctors (FEMS)
- *UEMS* - European Union of Medical Specialists

– Ends –

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