



**SIDIIEF**

SECRÉTARIAT INTERNATIONAL DES INFIRMIÈRES  
ET INFIRMIERS DE L'ESPACE FRANCOPHONE

Westmount, December 19, 2012

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Directorate-General Health and Consumers  
European Commission  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

**SUBJECT: Amendment to Directive 2005/36/CE of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications for nurses**

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Dear Doctor,

The Secrétariat international des infirmières et infirmiers de l'espace francophone (SIDIIEF) has been informed that the European Community, through its ENVI Standing Committee, is preparing to make drastic amendments to Directive 2005/36/CE of the European Parliament and the Council of September 7, 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications. The principle of allowing admission to nursing education after 10 years of schooling represents a backward step with especially worrying repercussions for the quality of care and patient safety.

Earlier, the SIDIIEF applauded the European Commission's position in favour of harmonizing nursing education in the LMD system. Since nursing education in German-speaking countries fell short of that standard, however, the EC is now preparing to seriously reduce the qualifications for a profession on which major hopes have been pinned with regard to the public health issues of the future.

There is widespread agreement on the healthcare challenges of the 21st century, in particular the urgent need to ensure quality practice, given the epidemic of chronic diseases and the rapidly ageing population.

Investing in nursing expertise is an enlightened choice, promising solutions in the medium and long terms. This expertise is a guarantee of interprofessional collaboration, innovation and fair and effective governance.

It seems logical to suggest that the commitment of a better-educated nursing workforce represents a productive investment, rather than an expenditure. Just think of the cost savings in terms of accidents, adverse events, complications and re-hospitalization, and the benefits for patients, their families and society as a whole. Proper nursing skills clearly contribute to strengthening healthcare systems.

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In view of the above, it is essential to understand that accepting two levels of education for the nursing profession in the European Community will seriously jeopardize patient safety and quality of care, not to mention the damage to the image of an already undervalued profession. This amendment, based on economic misconceptions, above all would completely undermine the efforts made in many countries to raise the bar for nursing education and the related clinical and scientific competencies.

For these reasons, SIDIIEF asks that the *licence* be made the entry requirement for the nursing profession throughout all European Community countries. There must be a complete university nursing curriculum available, from licence to doctorate. The training of nursing assistants is entirely possible and should be designed to simplify upgrading to university training; however, they would remain not nurses, but nursing assistants.

Thank you for your attention to the SIDIIEF's recommendations.

Yours truly,



Hélène Salette, RN, MSc  
Secretary General

Encl.: Geneva Declaration