

Green Paper On the European Workforce for Health

Swedish Riksdagen

Referred to the Committee on Health and Welfare January 14 2009. The Committee has presented an account of its examination of the Green Paper in statement 2008/09: SoU18 to the Chamber. The statement was decided upon March 25 2009. Consideration concluded with the Chamber filing the statement.

Summary of the Statement 2008/09: SoU18

In the statement, the Committee on Health and Welfare considers the European Commission's Green Paper on the European Workforce for Health. The Green Paper aims to describe as precisely as possible the challenges faced by the European health workforce which are common to all member states. Another aim is to stimulate debate on these issues in the EU. One reservation from the Social Democratic Party, the Left Party and the Green Party is included in the statement.

The Committee considers cooperation at the EU level in the field of health and medical care to be positive, provided that this does not disregard the principle of subsidiarity and the national responsibility to provide and organise health and medical services. Initiatives at the EU level should only be taken in issues involving cross-border problems and which contribute to a positive exchange of good practices. The Committee welcomes the initiative to stimulate dialogue in this area. The Committee especially wants to emphasise the matter of mobility for health workers in the EU, and the right of all citizens to health and medical care in other member states.

The proposed directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare is an important aspect of this work. The directive is expected to make it easier for individuals seeking healthcare in another EU country through the establishment of clearer rules and increased information and guidance for patients on the conditions that apply in the case of cross-border healthcare. This will give patients a stronger position and increase their opportunities for asserting their rights under the Treaty of Rome. Greater access to healthcare for patients can also improve the conditions for the activities of individual providers of services, and can help to develop this important part of the Swedish and European services sector.

The Committee also considers that it would be valuable, within the framework of continued efforts, to examine the obstacles to small enterprises in the health and medical care sectors.