

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4041/03

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to the Commission

Subject: The implementation of worker safety directives and protection of healthcare workers and their patients

It is estimated that 1 million needlestick injuries occur in Europe each year. Between 60 and 80% of these go unreported.

Studies show that a combination of training, safer working practices and the use of medical devices incorporating needlestick protection technology can prevent a large number of these potentially fatal injuries.

Every day Europe's healthcare workers are exposed to potentially fatal blood-borne pathogens, including hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, resulting from needlestick and other medical 'sharps' injuries.

Does the Commission agree that action needs to be taken in the form of the provision of specific EU guidelines to ensure consistent implementation of effective measures to prevent needlestick and other medical 'sharps' injuries across Europe?