

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR  
ON THE PROTECTION OF HOSPITAL WORKERS FROM  
OCCUPATIONAL RISKS RELATED TO CARCINOGENS  
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**The EU-OSHA perspective on carcinogens and work-related cancers**

Work-related cancer is an important issue to address in European OSH policy. According to EUROSTAT, cancer is the second main cause of death in the EU, with 1.3 million cancer deaths recorded per year. One out of four deaths are caused by cancer with lung cancer topping the list. More than half of work-related deaths are linked to cancer and this comes at a huge cost to society, employers and not least the workers and their families.

EU-OSHA has been addressing cancer and the exposure to cancer risk factors specifically through a number of studies focusing on the exposure to carcinogens, identifying the main factors and assessing how cancers and relevant exposures are monitored, while identifying some gaps in research and practice. The topic was also addressed transversally and included in many activities, including those focusing on the healthcare sector.

As the healthcare sector is a female-dominated sector, many conclusions and recommendations regarding a gender-sensitive approach to OSH policy, workplace risk assessment and the prevention of typical workplace risks can and should be applied to the field of prevention of cancer for the healthcare workforce. In this presentation, good practice examples will be presented that focus on recent issues discussed around the healthcare workforce, such as the use of cytostatic drugs at work, the application of nanomaterials and the use of disinfectants.

A 2014 EU-OSHA study on emerging risks highlighted trends and emerging OSH issues for this important and growing sector and will be complemented by an OSH overview conducted by EU-OSHA in 2022-2024, which effectively responds to the priority given to the sector in the newly published OSH strategic framework. EU-OSHA will also address health workers in its workers' exposure survey on cancer risk factors. An overview of these activities will be given.