

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON
THE PROTECTION OF HOSPITAL WORKERS FROM
THE OCCUPATIONAL RISKS RELATED TO CARCINOGENS
3 September 2021**

**Dr Alenka FORTE, MD, State Secretary
Ministry of Health (Slovenia)**

Closing speech

Dear Organisers and Colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to address you on behalf of the Ministry of Health in the closing section of the Seminar on the protection of hospital workers from the occupational risks related to carcinogens.

Due to the unfavourable epidemiological situation, Slovenia and other countries around the world are still intensively involved in the COVID-19 epidemic, but that does not mean that no other health problems exist or that they have been pushed into the background.

I am pleased with the response of domestic and international experts, which proves the topicality and importance of this expert event.

Cancer remains the leading public health problem that demands our utmost attention. I must emphasise that Slovenia's activities during its 2008 Presidency of the EU Council contributed greatly towards cancer now being a priority at the EU level. This year, a very ambitious Europe's Beating Cancer Plan was adopted, which will contribute to a more efficient prevention, early detection and screening, treatment and rehabilitation of patients across the EU. Slovenia is also in the process of adopting a new National Cancer Control Programme for the next ten years. The issue of work-related cancers and their prevention has an important place in the European plan and the national programme.

It is known that healthcare and other workers in hospitals may come into contact with carcinogens at their work. It is thus vital that such risks are known well and all preventive measures, which reduce the exposure to carcinogens and subsequent harmful effects on health, are consistently implemented.

I am certain that the conference has contributed to the visibility of the issue and that you will forward its findings to decision-makers in your countries so they can adopt all measures necessary for the further reduction of risks in health institutions. Cooperation at the EU level has great added value in this field.

Thank you to all the experts for your contributions and thank you for all your efforts. I wish you successful work in the future.