

## Aspetti critici della gestione dei “lavoratori rischiosi” nei servizi sanitari. Documento di Consenso\*

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### KEY WORDS

Hazardous workers; ethics; risk management; bloodborne diseases; impaired physician

### SUMMARY

«*Critical aspects of the management of “hazardous” health care workers. Consensus Document*». **Background:** *A worker is considered to be hazardous to others when, in the course of performing a specific work task, his/her health problems (e.g., substance dependence, emotional disorders, physical disability, transmissible diseases) pose a risk for other workers' or the public's health and safety, or begins to interfere with ability to function in profession life. The presence of certain illnesses or the fact that a health care worker is impaired because of them do not necessarily imply that he, or she, is hazardous for others. Working in health care increases the probability that an impaired worker being hazardous for others. Management of hazardous workers requires new techniques and procedures, and specific policies.* **Objective and methods:** *An interdisciplinary group of experts from medical, bioethical, legal and*

*administrative disciplines, together with trade union and employers' representatives, is currently attempting to define a way to put prevention measures into practice in accordance with state laws and individual rights. Results: A consensus document is presented, covering critical aspects such as: social responsibility of the employer, risk management, informed consent, non compliance, confidentiality, responsibility of workers, disclosure of risk to patients, non-discrimination, counselling and recovery of impaired workers, effectiveness of international guidelines. Conclusions: Occupational health professionals are obliged to adhere to ethical principles in the management of "hazardous" workers; the assessment of ethical costs and benefits for the stakeholders is the basis for appropriate decisions.*