

# socialplatform

Brussels, 4 September 2006

For the attention of the College of Commissioners

**Re: Discussion on planned health services initiative**

Dear Commissioners,

We understand that you will have a discussion on 5<sup>th</sup> of September on a health services initiative proposed by DG SANCO and we would like to offer you our own comments on this subject, in the hope that they are useful to you.

The Social Platform is the alliance of representative European federations and networks of non-governmental organisations active in the social sector. Our members include both health and social services providers as well as users' organisations.

The Social Platform has been actively involved in the discussions on the "Services Directive" and the Communication on *social services of general interest* adopted by the Commission in May 2006. Based on the experience of our members, we believe that the **separation between health services and social services is not useful or sustainable**. Many personal services provided by our members contain both health services and social services dimensions. With the recent announcement by the Commission of a "health directive" we fear that a separate approach between health and social services would create a confusing legal framework for our members as they would not know how to classify the services they provide.

Before deciding about any separate EU framework for health services, we therefore **urge you to first consult stakeholders within the health and social services sector, and in particular to await the results of the consultation process announced by the Commission in its communication on social services of general interest**.

We would be very pleased to have the possibility to meet with you to discuss this issue further.

Yours sincerely,



Anne-Sophie Parent  
President