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European Pillar of Social Rights presents new and significant step forward
EFNA and PAE welcome the European Commission's Work-Life Balance Package

The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) and Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) warmly welcome the European Commission's new legislative initiative to grant carers across Europe minimum rights to leave and to flexible working arrangements.

The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) and Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) coordinate the MEP Interest Group on Brain, Mind and Pain. Working together, they contributed to the Social Pillar consultation <http://bit.ly/2rgGmSm>

Ann Little, President EFNA, described the introduction of five days paid leave per annum for working relatives of the sick and elderly as 'A great step forward' and said, 'We will be working with allies in the European Parliament to build on that as part of our campaign to #MakeWorkWork'.

Ann commended the Commission's recognition of the huge contribution of carers in the new Directive which extends the right to request flexible working arrangements - reduced working hours, flexible working hours and flexibility in place of work - to all carers with dependent relatives.

Across Europe, millions of people of all ages struggle with brain, mind and pain disorders. These are long-term conditions that severely impact quality of life, often leading to considerable disability and sometimes to reduced life expectancy.

Informal caregiving currently affects economic productivity considerably through lost opportunity for the caregiver to undertake paid work and a lack of tax revenues from the unpaid work.ⁱ

The Directive notes people with disabilities have the right to income support that ensures living in dignity, services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs.

Together, EFNA and PAE will continue to urge the 28 Member States to implement cost-effective retention, reintegration and rehabilitation actions for people with chronic brain and pain diseases.

The groups will also continue to urge the European Commission to work in close cooperation with the Member States and social partners, to clarify patients' rights,

highlight successful workplace adjustments and reintegration actions – e.g. flexible working hours – and to promote the use of the European Social Fund for such actions.

We will be working to ensure the Work-Life Balance Package is strengthened during negotiations with the European Parliament and 28 Member States.

ⁱ The total cost of dementia in the EU in 2008 was estimated at €160 billion, of which 56% (€90 billion) were costs associated with informal care . Across Europe, caregivers of people with chronic pain provided an average of 27.5 hours of care per week. This ranged from 9.9 hours per week in France to 48.7 hours per week in Italy .

[For more information, please visit:](#)

- https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/deeper-and-fairer-economic-and-monetary-union/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_en

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[About The European Federation of Neurological Associations \(EFNA\)](#)

The European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) brings together European umbrella organisations of neurological patient advocacy groups, to work with other associations with similar aims including the European Patients Forum (EPF) and the European Brain Council (EBC). EFNA's aims are to improve the quality of life of people with neurological disorders, their families and carers by working in four strategic areas: Awareness – Advocacy – Empowerment – Engagement.

[About Pain Alliance Europe](#)

Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) is a Pan-European organization of national and or regional associations involved in chronic pain regardless any underlying condition. At this moment PAE has 34 members from 17 different EU countries which in turn represent over 350.000 individual chronic pain patients. Those 34 associations are working together to achieve PAE's mission; To improve the quality of life of people living with chronic pain in Europe.