



# Hospital staffing: Ethical dilemmas and political decisions in a period of recession

Malta 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012

*Jacqueline Filkins*



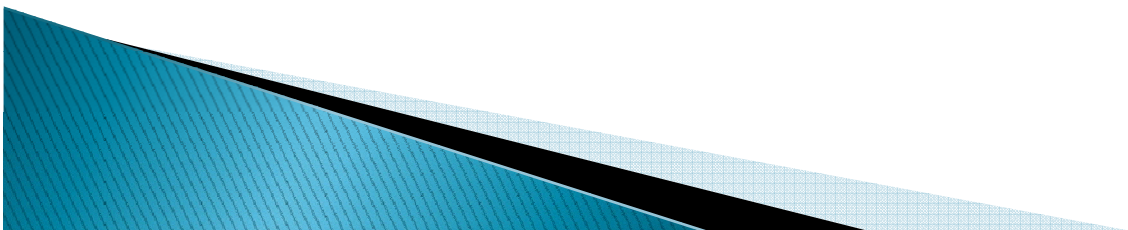
# The impact of words

A

Hospital staffing: Ethical dilemmas and political decisions in a period of recession

B

Ethical dilemmas and political decisions related to hospital staffing in a period of recession

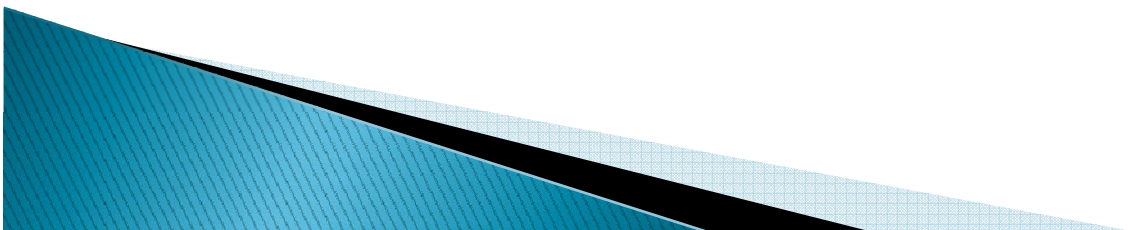


**Content: Three key themes are being addressed**

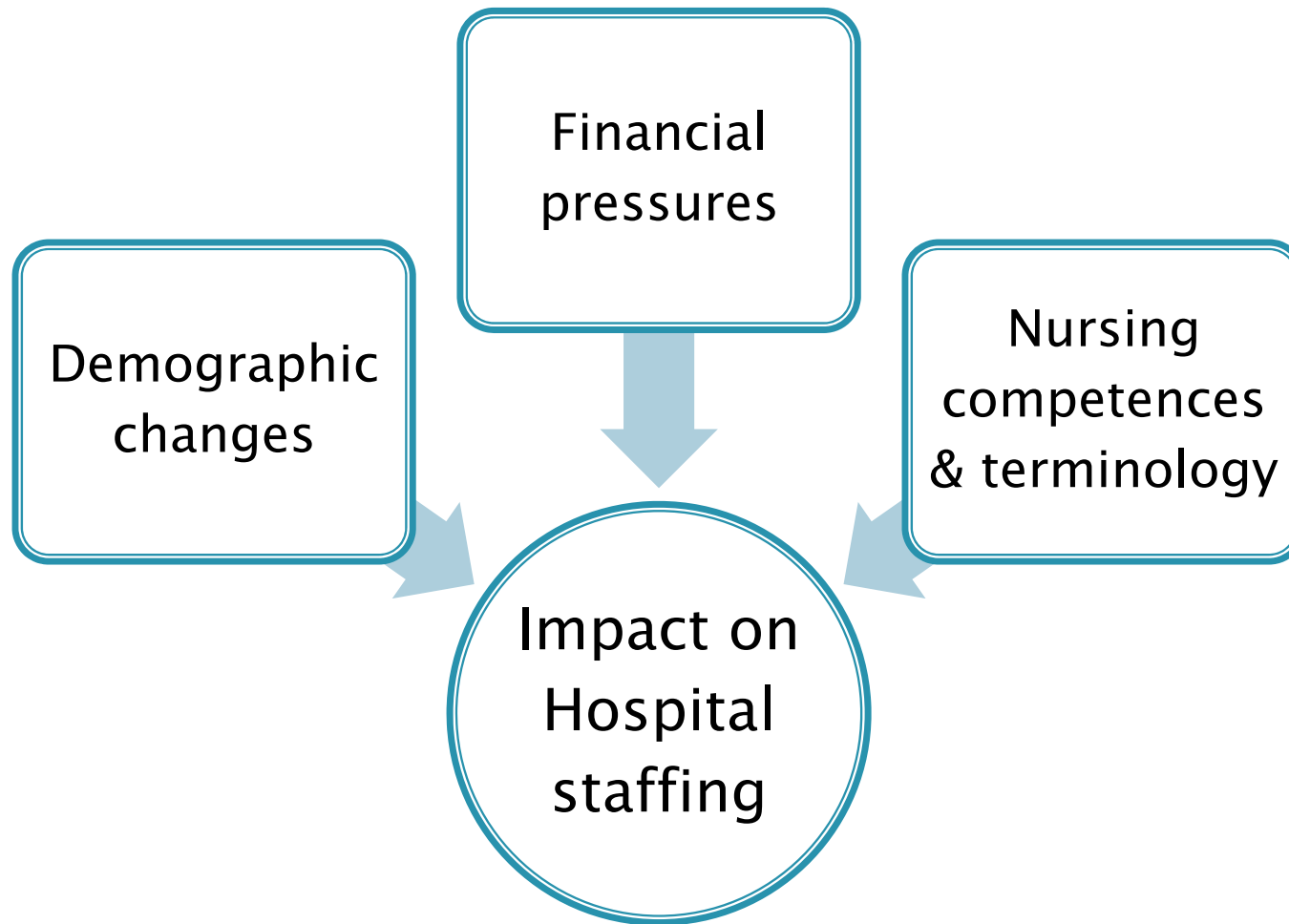
Hospital staffing

Recession and politics

Ethical dilemmas



# Some of the issues that affect Hospital staffing

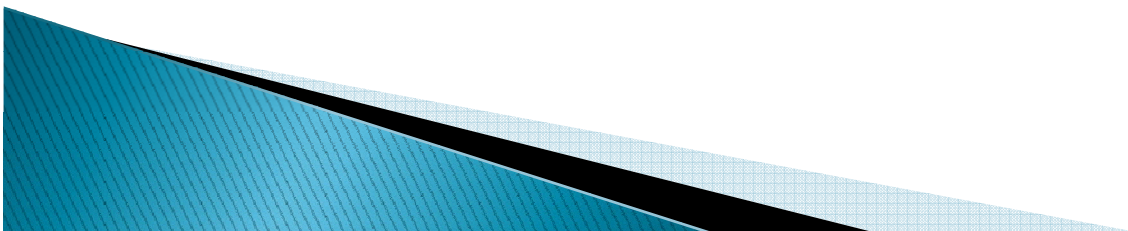


# Recession and politics

Defining recession: ...it is a period of temporary economic decline during which trade and industrial activity are reduced.

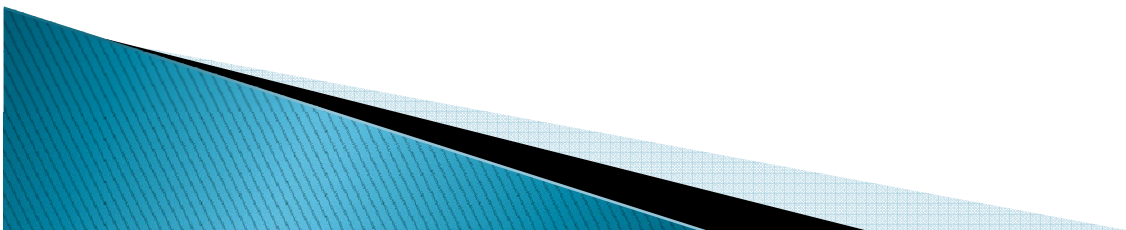
Synonyms for recession: retreat, slump, depression etc.

Political effects: efficiency drives, reviews of pay and conditions of employment and more.



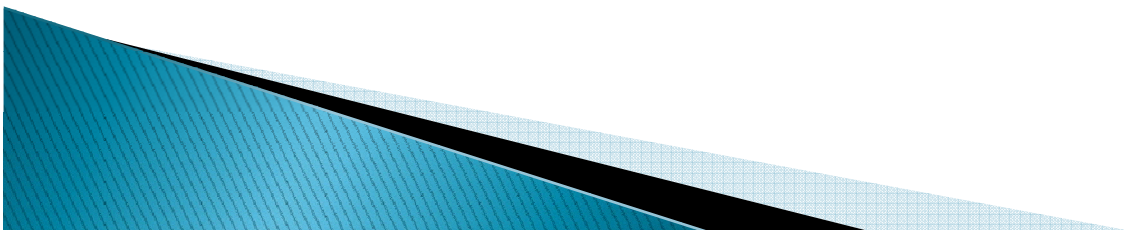
# Recession and politics continued: European-wide impact

- ▶ Unplanned and short-term approaches leave patients vulnerable and staff demoralised. The EU initiative to combat work dependant depression is launched. The cost to the economy is recognised.
- ▶ Europe's 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable growth in employment struggles. Key actions need to be taken (see Action Plan for the EU health workforce)



# Ethical dilemmas and decision-taking by Nurse Directors

- ▶ Leading effectively is a key statement in job descriptions – but leading ethically is only implied.
- ▶ ENDA identifies a gap and develops a Proto-Code of Ethics for European Nurse Directors.
- ▶ First draft published in 2009, Proto-Code launched in Rome 2011.

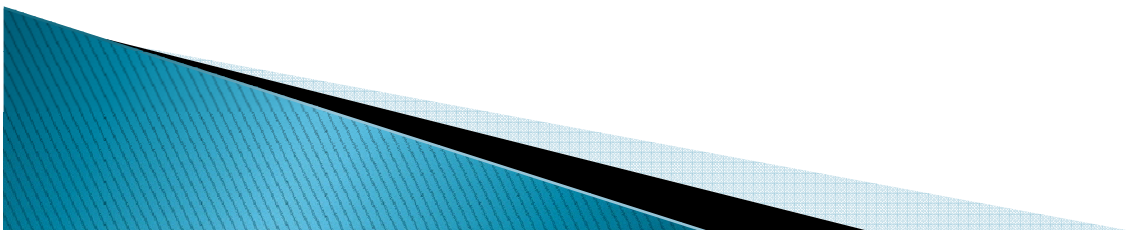


# Some of the questions encountered during the process

*Why do we need a code of ethics for Nurse Directors?*

*How does a code of ethics differ from a code of conduct?*

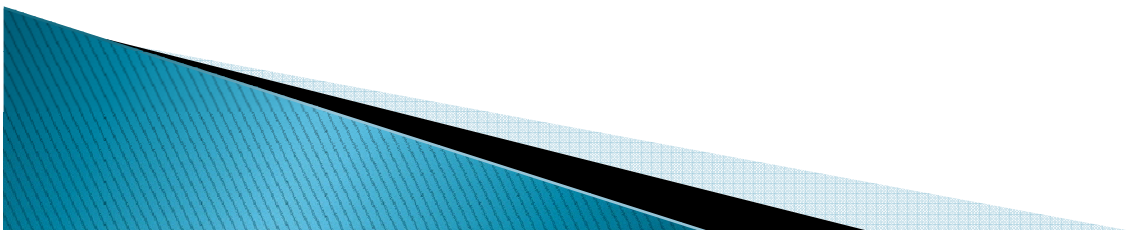
*What is a Proto-code of Ethics?*





# One year on

- ▶ Seek evidence that it is a living document
- ▶ Collect information on how it is applied
- ▶ Respond to emerging queries (translation issues)
- ▶ Promote conscious ethical decision making
- ▶ Present feedback from implementation groups at next year's ENDA congress in Zurich



# One of the key principles of the Proto-Code states:

Nurse Directors are accountable both to the staff and general public for the initiative and resources they manage, acting with respect and according to the principles of distributive justice, equity, efficacy and efficiency



# Conclusion

- ▶ Healthcare is not immune to the effects of the recession
- ▶ Quick fix solutions miss opportunities and can lead to demotivation
- ▶ Examining whole systems benefits patients and lead to greater efficiency

*.....to do good and no harm*

