



BREACH OF MEDICAL CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY? YOUR EXPERIENCE IS OF INTEREST TO US

PMO and the services of DG HR are becoming increasingly involved in staff privacy. Processes historically managed by DG ADMIN (the ancestor of DG HR) have been transferred to the PMO, which was created to manage your entitlements, medical coverage or even absences as we saw with the COVID.

Beside, in terms of social security, there is a strict separation in the Member States between the departments managing your medical file and the medical control. The exchange of information between these two services is heavily regulated for obvious reasons.

This medical dichotomy is a healthy principle. At the Commission, the two departments (medical service and absence control service) belong to the same Directorate-General. COVID has seriously undermined the necessary difference between the two. The Medical Service typically asked for information about your absences; or PMO requested reports of surgery and other data that were supposed to be protected. One refers to the transfer of data from one service to another. In some cases, the same information was made available to such a large number of persons/services that there could be serious doubts as to the guarantee of secrecy. This doubt is heightened when one looks at the high Staff turnover at PMO. Confidentiality procedures exist 'on paper'. However, the procedures for the transfer and security of personal data are no longer sufficient to tranquilise some of our colleagues who are asking themselves where this will end. Even more so if one takes into account the questions about the future of our health system.

It should be pointed out here that in the Member States some of the practices referred to are of a criminal law nature and could therefore potentially be condemned if verified. But having expressed this, and before crying wolf, we would like to collect your experiences.