

Doctor Walkouts in France Enter Second Week



Paris, December 30 (RHC)-- Industrial action by French doctors has gained momentum with more doctors joining a nationwide Christmas time strike. Hundreds of out-of-hours doctors joined the industrial action on Monday amid reports of hospital accidents and emergency rooms being overworked.

French media outlets have reported that due to the strike around 80 percent of general practitioners' surgeries have been closed down. General practitioners (GPs) and specialists have been staging walkouts since December 23rd in protests to what they referred to as unreasonable working conditions and schedules.

They are now joined by the nationwide organization SOS Medecins, which runs an emergency helpline and organizes night time and weekend home visits by doctors. The physicians are also unsatisfied about a health bill which will permit pharmacists to vaccinate patients.

The latest industrial action has sparked fears of further overloading of hospitals which are already stretched to their limits because of the busy Christmas and year-end period.

France, Europe's second-biggest economy, is grappling with political and economic crises, which are seen as the worst since President Francois Hollande took power in May 2012. The austerity measures adopted by the Paris government have put French citizens under more financial pressure than ever.



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