

# *Costa Rican health workers begin strike against privatization*

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San Jose, August 6 (RHC)-- Costa Rican health workers began a general strike Monday for 48 hours in demand for strong health services and to defend the Costa Rican Social Security (CCSS).

Workers associated with the health sector's Trade Union Front began the stoppage, which will last until early Wednesday as reported by the National Union of Employees of the Fund and Social Security and the Trade Union Front.

During the strike "minimum emergency care services, pharmacies, laboratories, inpatients and X-rays will be guaranteed" according to the workers. The striking employees gathered in their workspaces like hospitals, health offices, and clinics from where they will carry out various actions such as general assemblies and demonstrations.

The objective of the strike is to respect the agreements signed "by the CCSS authorities and workers' representatives to guarantee labor rights, demand the non-implementation of the Fiscal Rule and the reduction of budgets that will affect the services of attention to patients and insured," said the press release.

The statement also stressed that they require the government to pay the debt owed by Social Security, equivalent to about \$2.6 billion, and that of large entrepreneurs, about \$460 million. The statement concluded by reiterating that the workers were against any attempt by the government to privatize health

services.

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