

Doctors' strike hits Portuguese hospitals

May 8 2018

A doctors' strike severely disrupted Portuguese hospitals Tuesday as they pressed their case for increased pay and more staff.

The two unions organising the strike said that about 80 percent of hospital doctors had walked off the job.

"Apart from the emergency departments, everything else is at a halt in the country's main hospitals and consultations have been rescheduled," Jorge Roque Cunha, head of the Independent Union of Doctors (SIM) told AFP.

After a series of negotiations with the authorities, the doctors are demanding a change to salary grades and the recruitment of more staff, especially for emergency units.

"The public understands our situation and even if the strike forces them to delay appointments, they are supportive," Joao Proenca, head of the National Doctors Union (FNAM) told AFP.

The unions say minimum services will be assured during the 3-day [strike](#) as they seek to reverse massive public spending cuts imposed as part of a 78-billion-euros (\$89-billion) IMF-EU backed debt bailout for Portugal in 2011.

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Citation: Doctors' strike hits Portuguese hospitals (2018, May 8) retrieved 10 May 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-05-doctors-portuguese-hospitals.html>

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