



Union Européenne de l'Hospitalisation Privée European Union of Private Hospitals

Press Release

Private Hospitals Call for Stronger Role in EU Health Crisis Strategies

As the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union prioritizes health security and crisis preparedness, private hospitals across Europe are urging EU institutions to formally recognize and integrate private healthcare providers into future emergency response strategies.

The effects of summer have already been felt across the European Union this year, from forest fires to massive heatwaves. The impacts of summer are acutely experienced by our populations, especially the most vulnerable. Summer also highlights the shortage of healthcare professionals, which calls for better planning and complementarity between public and private providers.

This message aligns with the European Commission's recent Communication on "Preparing the EU for the Next Health Crisis – A Medical Countermeasures Strategy", which outlines how Europe can strengthen access to essential tools such as vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, and protective equipment in future crises. This applies not only to future pandemic scenarios but also to the climate-related health challenges we are already facing.

Private hospitals were a frontline force during the COVID-19 pandemic. We expanded ICU capacity, supported overwhelmed public systems, and helped deliver critical care across Europe. As the EU plans for future crises, private hospitals must no longer be treated as an afterthought but included as essential partners in preparedness and response.

According to the latest OECD data, 42% of hospital beds in Europe are private or in the social sector. In fact, in most cases, European countries have mixed healthcare systems, both in terms of provision and financing. So, with large infrastructure networks and logistical



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capabilities, private hospitals are well-positioned to help deploy medical countermeasures swiftly and at scale.

The Danish Presidency has highlighted the importance of innovation in medical countermeasures. Private hospitals — often working closely with biotech and medtech firms — are at the forefront of implementing and testing new diagnostics and therapeutics. Ensuring that these partnerships are incentivized and supported at the EU level will drive more rapid adoption of breakthrough technologies during crises.

Furthermore, the private sector must be eligible for EU funding and public-private partnership initiatives under programs like EU4Health and Horizon Europe, particularly when investing in preparedness infrastructure or digital health tools.

Private hospitals are calling for transparent partnerships and joint planning efforts.

We call on the European Commission and the Danish Presidency to ensure that future preparedness frameworks establish clear, transparent mechanisms for collaboration with private healthcare providers. This includes:

- Inclusion in national preparedness planning
- Representation in EU advisory forums on health crisis management
- Access to EU-financed stockpiles and emergency procurement mechanisms
- Participation in joint training, simulation exercises, and communication campaigns

“A stronger European Health Union must include all care providers — public and private alike. This is not just about equity; it’s about effectiveness,” said Oscar Gaspar, President of UEHP — the European Union of Private Hospitals. “We stand ready to contribute our expertise, infrastructure, and innovation to protect the health of EU citizens.”

As Europe works to build a more resilient health architecture, the inclusion of all healthcare actors will be essential to its success.