

Question for written answer E-000270/2023
to the Commission
Rule 138
Ernest Urtasun (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Tackling the energy crisis's impact on the health sector to keep providing decent patient care

Many hospitals around Europe, including in Germany, Belgium, Spain, Ireland, France and Portugal, are struggling with inflation, staff shortages and the continued fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. These are causing major complications and hindering hospitals' ability to provide decent patient care.

On top of this, the energy crisis has led to rising production and transport costs for medical equipment and to many hospitals closing certain care units or even verging on bankruptcy. Such factors could force patients to travel long distances to receive care. This is in spite of hospitals' efforts to become more energy-efficient. In this context, it is worth highlighting that hospitals in Europe typically spend around 2 % to 5 % of their budget on energy.

1. How is the Commission planning to help struggling hospitals in Europe to cover their energy costs and prevent patients from delaying or avoiding seeking care because of high costs?
2. What urgent measures is it planning to implement in order to improve the energy efficiency of EU hospitals?
3. With major staff shortages in healthcare and elderly care across the EU, how will it contribute to ensuring that the running costs of hospitals and care centres do not result in more professionals leaving their jobs?

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