

**Priority question for written answer P-002008/2022  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Deaths of patients in Gela, health care deficiencies in the area and the effectiveness of EU funds in the health sector

In January 2022, following an outbreak of COVID-19 among medical personnel at Vittorio Emanuele Hospital in Gela, seven patients died as a result of having to be transferred more than 70 km away to Caltanissetta hospital owing to the resultant staff shortages in Gela.<sup>1</sup>

This tragedy, which has left local people bereft, has highlighted the disastrous state of health care in Caltanissetta and the wider district of Gela: a shortage of doctors, critical structural and management issues, the absence of fundamental departments such as haemodynamics, a stroke unit, emergency gastroenterology, a breast unit, and many other essential departments.<sup>2</sup>

The EU funds spent in the district are not sufficient to ensure the right to health.

In the light of Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the EU4Health programme and the allocation of European resources for the expansion of health services, e.g. through InvestEU and the ERDF OP, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. How much has been allocated in previous periods and how much still needs to be committed to the health sector in the district of Gela?
2. Has it ascertained whether the objectives outlined in the health spending programmes in the district have been met?
3. Does it intend to consider specific targets for the effectiveness of expenditure in areas with particularly poor health-care outcomes?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://video.sky.it/news/cronaca/video/gela-deceduti-i-pazienti-trasferiti-da-terapia-intensiva-728929>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2022/01/20/covid-focolaio-tra-i-sanitari-chiude-il-reparto-di-terapia-intensiva-dellospedale-di-gela-sette-pazienti-trasferiti-con-elisoccorso-e-ambulanze/6462731/>