

# Joint Statement of Demand for sustainable purchases in Belgian Hospitals

We, the five Brussels hospitals of the Greening the Brussels healthcare sector project (Cliniques de l'Europe, CHIREC, CHU Saint Pierre, Cliniques universitaires Saint Luc, and Hôpitaux Iris Sud), are committed to becoming sustainable hospitals.

According to a study published in 2019 by Health Care Without Harm<sup>1</sup>, **the Belgian healthcare sector has a significant carbon footprint: 9 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e, accounting for 5.5% of the country's net emissions.** Our purchases contribute significantly to these emissions, thus having a considerable impact on the environment and society.

As healthcare institutions, we aim to promote the most sustainable products in our facilities. We are therefore calling on suppliers to be more transparent about their products and to share more key information.

Increased collaboration from suppliers would enable our institutions to make more sustainable purchases contributing to:

- Greater patient safety
- Better care quality
- Reduction of environmental, social, and societal impacts

By collaborating more and sharing more information about the sustainability impacts of their products, suppliers will also strengthen their long-term relationships with the hospitals and become reliable and trustful partners.

Due to increasingly future European regulations, suppliers will sooner or later have to better measure and communicate the sustainability impacts of their products.

Through this joint statement of demand, we call for the mobilisation of other Belgian and European hospitals to create a wider and more impactful market demand.

We aim to send a strong message to the market:

**Together, we will become increasingly demanding regarding the sustainability criteria of our future purchases.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://noharm-global.org/documents/appendix-c-health-care-emissions-national-snapshots>

## Key information for sustainable purchases

We would like to share with our suppliers which kind of information is needed to assess the sustainability of their products. Each information must be reliable, verifiable, and understandable for our buyers and procurement agencies.

**Product composition and presence of harmful substances:** The list of all components of the product must be available (from container to content). Any presence of harmful or dangerous substances in the products must be indicated (refer to the **European healthcare's phase-out list for chemicals of concern**<sup>2</sup>). Suppliers must be able to validly justify the essential nature of a harmful substance if they cannot remove it from their product.

**Traceability and origin:** Whenever possible, specify the geographical origin, sustainability of raw materials (resource depletion), and the tracking and control of products from their source to delivery.

**Social responsibility:** Provide information on social responsibility practices (safety, working and wage conditions, etc.) and efforts to promote fairness and diversity. Suppliers must prove compliance with the minimum labor standards set by the International Labour Organization.<sup>3</sup>

**Production and manufacturing standards:** Mention production and manufacturing standards, such as labels, environmental certifications (such as ISO 14001), and environmentally friendly manufacturing practices used.

**Product lifespan, packaging, and waste management:** Inform whether the product and packaging are reusable, repairable, or can be remanufactured, along with their lifespans. Suppliers should share best practices on end-of-life product management, waste management, and measures to be taken according to current regulations.

**Life Cycle Analysis (LCA):** If conducted independently, the assumptions must be thoroughly justified. It should be noted that modeling can be complicated due to a lack of available data and the difficulty of collecting all incoming and outgoing flows in the life cycle of the studied product. Only targeted and carefully developed LCAs, following a detailed protocol, can provide useful information for the specific environment and parameters used in the analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> **European healthcare's phase-out list for chemicals of concern | HCWH , 2021**

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/wages/lang--en/index.htm>

## The signatories



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*With the support of*



**Without Harm**

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# Appendix

## ***A stronger demand***

To achieve our sustainable purchasing goals, it is crucial that we demonstrate to our suppliers that there is a strong market demand. This means that other healthcare establishments have similar information needs to meet sustainability objectives.

We seek to identify other healthcare establishments that share the same interests and commitments toward greater information sharing from suppliers to support these goals.

## ***Our call to mobilisation***

We call on all healthcare establishments to support this joint statement of demand and thereby demand greater transparency from suppliers regarding the environmental and social impacts of their products. Increased cooperation and understanding of issues between hospitals and suppliers would contribute to making the healthcare sector more sustainable.

## ***Why we must lead by example***

We do recognise the essential role of healthcare establishments as drivers of change to address sustainability challenges. Anticipating stronger European regulations, we aim to prioritise suppliers who share with us key and useful information for our sustainable purchases.