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WEEKLY EU HEALTHCARE NEWS UPDATE

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THE EU'S NEW HEALTH SECURITY FRAMEWORK ENTERED INTO FORCE

The components of the European Health Union have been formally in effect since December 25. The same applies to enhanced EU rules on serious cross-border health threats. An official announcement from the European Commission states that as of December 25, the building blocks of the European Health Union are now officially operational.

The cornerstones of the new EU Health Union not only include stricter EU rules on serious cross-border health threats, but also a strengthened mandate for the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and a new emergency framework for medical countermeasures. It means that the stronger ECDC is now able to host a new excellence network of EU reference laboratories and establish an EU Health Task Force for rapid health interventions in the event of a major outbreak.

As explained, the new legislation complements the European Health Union's preparedness and response capacity, which creates a robust legal framework for improving EU capacity in crucial areas: prevention, preparedness, surveillance, risk assessment, early warning, response.

Moreover, to make the Emergency Framework Regulation effective, it is now possible to establish (within HERA) a Health Crisis Council. The council will quickly coordinate the supply and access to medical countermeasures at the EU level. It is also significant that the regulation allows, among other things, the launch of EU manufacturing facilities and research and innovation plans in case of emergencies.

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_7871

ITALY URGES OTHER EU COUNTRIES TO TEST CHINA ARRIVALS FOR COVID-19, BUT MANY DECLINE

On Thursday (29 December) Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni urged the rest of the European Union Member States to follow its lead and test travellers from China for COVID, but others see no need for such measures or are waiting for a common stance across the largely borderless Union.

Meloni addressed the EU peers while Brussels hosted EU health committee, made of officials from health ministries across and chaired by the European Commission. It ended its meeting with a call for a united EU stance. It is not the first time that EU countries are divided when it comes to COVID-19 measures. At the start of the pandemic, there has been much debate on what to do, combined with a competition to buy safety equipment. And so far, only Italy ordered COVID-19 antigen tests for all the people coming from China. In this regard, during her Thursday address,

But earlier on the same day, the head of the French health risk assessment committee COVARIS, Brigitte Autran, said that "from a scientific point of view, there is no reason at this stage to bring back controls at the borders." Germany and Portugal also claim they see no need for new travel restrictions, while Austria underlined the economic benefits of Chinese tourists' return to Europe.

It is worth mentioning that the Italian prime minister, who criticised national lockdown measures while she was in opposition, once said she did not believe that the reintroduction of restrictive measures would be the best way to face a possible new COVID crisis.

Source: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/covid-testing-china-italy-eu-b2253021.html>

POLISH MOH: POLAND WILL TRANSFER UKRAINIAN PATIENTS TO OTHER EU COUNTRIES

The announcement on cooperation regarding the transfer of suffering Ukrainian patients out of Poland was made at a Wednesday press conference at Medevac Hub Jasionka, attended by Health Minister Adam Niedzielski, Ukrainian Health Minister Viktor Liashko and Ukrainian Ambassador to Poland Vasyl Zwarycz.

Minister Niedzielski stressed that "the transport of patients included those directly affected by warfare, for example, with gunshot wounds, as well as oncology patients.,, Minister Niedzielski also referred to Poland's ability to provide medical assistance to Ukrainian citizens. As he pointed out, the infrastructure of Medevac Hub Jasionka, as well as the system of transporting patients, are prepared for a possible increase in the number of incoming patients.- If only there was a crisis on the Ukrainian side and Russia's attacks on critical infrastructure intensified, especially this winter, we could receive many more patients. We are available and waiting for a clear signal from Minister Lashko regarding a possible increase in capacity," he explained.

Medevac Hub Jasionka opened in September 2022 as part of a broader medical evacuation program for Ukrainian patients, launched by the European Union in March 2022. The Hub is maintained by the Polish Center for International Aid and funded by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. It provides a possibility for the rapid relocation of Ukrainian patients to European Union countries and others, such as Norway.

Source: <https://www.termedia.pl/mz/Jestesmy-gotowi-do-zwiekszenia-wydolnosci-Medevac-Hub-Jasionka-,49867.html>

Thank you for your attention!

ul. J.P. Woronicza 3 lok. 254

02-640 Warszawa

tel./fax: +48 22 749 13 13

e-mail: visiongroup@visiongroup.pl

www.visiongroup.pl



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