
Collaboration is Key to the Future of Hospitals Concludes the 46th World Hospital Congress



The 46th World Hospital Congress came to a close today in Lisbon (Portugal) with a ceremony to hand over hosting duties for [the 47th World Hospital Congress to Rio de Janeiro \(Brazil\) in 2024](#).

The Congress is the premier event for global leaders and decision-makers in the healthcare community. It returned to Lisbon for the first time since 1957 and was held under the High Patronage of the President of the Portuguese Republic.

Over three days, around 1,400 delegates from 91 countries and territories gathered at Lisbon Congress Centre for 46 plenary and parallel sessions; more than 200 renowned speakers; 400 poster presentations; and industry exhibitions. Co-organized by the IHF and a consortium of the Portuguese Association for Hospital Development (APDH), the Portuguese Association of Hospital Managers (APAH), and the Portuguese Association of Private Hospitals (APHP), the theme for this 46th World Hospital Congress was “global learning, local action”.

In a video address to Congress delegates, Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, stated:

“Hospitals play a key role in achieving Universal Health Coverage, demanding us to continually rethink their role and capacity. WHO in the European region envisions the hospital of tomorrow as technologically advanced, patient-centred, seamlessly integrated with community health, and rooted in sustainability.

Hospitals need to be integral components of community health and regional economies, and beyond addressing physical ailments, hospitals must heal from the social, economic, and psychological aftermath of crises.

It is crystal clear that aligning efforts across different organizations and nations is crucial. Time and tide wait for no man. It is up to us to keep pace and prepare for what the future holds.”

The President of the Portuguese Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, addressed the Congress delegates at the Closing Ceremony and spoke about the opportunities for healthcare leaders to find common solutions to shared challenges through international collaboration:

“The theme of this Congress – ‘Global learning, local action’ – reflects the importance of harnessing global knowledge, skills, and experience to tackle the single, different, and specific challenges faced at the local level.

The world is more interconnected than ever – exchange of ideas and practices across borders is fundamental in our quest for progress. The result is a body of knowledge that will strengthen our health system and by extension the health and wellbeing of our citizens and societies. I thank you for your dedication. I look forward to the continued collaboration and progress that will undoubtedly result from this meeting.”

Representatives of the Portuguese Consortium ceremonially handed over organizing responsibilities to Dr Adelvão Francisco Morato, President of the Brazilian Hospital Federation (FBH). The IHF will organize the 47th World Hospital Congress Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 10 to 12 September 2024, in collaboration with FBH.

Dr Morato shared his admiration for the Lisbon Congress, and his vision for the next edition:

"We are committed to promoting a landmark meeting in 2024, which will go down in the history of almost five decades of holding the IHF's World Hospital Congress. We are already working to offer a scientific framework of excellence, as well as initiatives to promote connections and unforgettable experiences.

We want to make this event an even bigger success! We look forward to welcoming our colleagues from around the world and sharing with them the beauty and uniqueness of the Marvellous City [Rio de Janeiro]."

Beyond the Congress' scientific programme, there were several highlight events.

- Announcing the winners in each of seven prestigious categories of the IHF Awards 2023 at a spectacular Awards Ceremony and Gala Dinner: <https://ihf-fih.org/what-we-do/ihf-awards/ihf-awards-winning-stories/>.
- Unveiled a new addition to the knowledge exchange opportunities at Congress – the *i-to-i* Innovation Hub – featuring 15 cutting-edge tools and products from around the world that are already demonstrating a transformative impact on improving access and increasing the efficiency of sustainable, high-quality, patient-centred care: <https://ihf-fih.org/news-insights/line-up-for-i-to-i-innovation-hub-2023/>.
- Awarding the best poster presentations, as judged by the committee, as well as the People's Choice Awards, as voted for by Congress delegates: <https://ihf-fih.org/news-insights/winners-of-best-poster-awards-at-the-world-hospital-congress-2023-announced/>.
- The IHF's Geneva Sustainability Centre launching its Sustainability Accelerator Tool (SAT): an innovative new platform to digitally empower hospitals and healthcare leaders to drive sustainable, low-carbon, equitable, and resilient healthcare. <https://ihf-fih.org/press-and-media/geneva-sustainability-centre-launches-sustainability-accelerator-tool-for-hospitals/>
- Promoting a legacy in Lisbon, with local hospital leaders endorsing the " *Cycling for All*" pledge in partnership with APDH, APAH, and APHP. It demonstrates a commitment by IHF members to embed sustainability into every aspect of healthcare delivery.

The initiative was designed with inputs from Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) and the support of the national cycling federation, Federação Portuguesa de Ciclismo (FPC). The Secretary of State of Health Promotion, Margarida Tavares, shared her thoughts on the initiative:

"Active travel initiatives like Cycling for All benefit health in the short and long term while helping to reduce our impact on the environment. We're pleased to endorse the initiative and hope that many hospitals in the country will follow."

To view key moments from this year's congress, watch the 2023 World Hospital Congress highlights video:

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