

To: European Commission, DG SANTE

Attn.: European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides

Address: Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels, Belgium

Date: 28 March 2024

Open Letter: Urgent Appeal for the Reconsideration of Budget Cuts to the EU4Health Programme

Dear Commissioner Kyriakides,

We write to you on behalf of the [EU Structural Heart Disease \(SHD\) Coalition](#) Steering Committee to express our deep concern regarding the recent decision to redeploy EUR 1 billion from the EU4Health programme to other EU policies. As stakeholders committed to improving cardiovascular health and addressing the burden of Structural Heart Disease across Europe, we believe that this decision jeopardizes essential initiatives aimed at disease prevention, health promotion, and healthcare system strengthening.

The European SHD Coalition comprises stakeholders and experts dedicated to raising awareness about structural heart disease and advocating for improved detection, treatment, and outcomes for affected individuals. Structural heart disease, including conditions such as heart valve disorders and congenital heart defects, poses significant challenges to patients and healthcare systems alike. **Timely detection and effective management are critical to mitigating the impact of these conditions on patients' lives and reducing healthcare costs** associated with complications and hospitalizations.

The **EU4Health programme plays a pivotal role in supporting initiatives aimed at disease prevention and health promotion**, including those targeting cardiovascular diseases and structural heart disease specifically. By reallocating funds away from EU4Health, particularly through disproportionate cuts of at least 20% of the programme, the European Council risks compromising the EU's ability to address pressing public health priorities.

We urge you to reconsider the decision to cut funding from the EU4Health programme and to advocate for the preservation of its budget to ensure continued support for initiatives aimed at improving public health outcomes across Europe and explore alternative solutions to support the new priorities.

As the European Commission plays a central role in shaping EU health policies and initiatives, we trust that you will consider our concerns and advocate for the preservation of funding for the EU4Health programme. We stand ready to collaborate with you and other stakeholders to ensure that European health policies remain responsive to the needs of patients and healthcare systems across the continent.

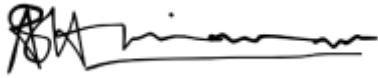
Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response and to continued collaboration in advancing cardiovascular health and addressing structural heart disease in Europe.

Sincerely,

The Steering Committee of the EU SHD Coalition

Arunima Himawan

Senior Health Research Lead, International Longevity Centre

**Prof. Alessandro Boccanelli**

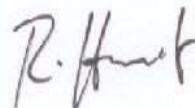
Vice President of the Italian Society of Geriatric Cardiology (SICGE)

**Prof. Dr. Ralph-Stephan von Bardeleben**

Head of the Centre of Structural Heart Disease Interventions and the Heart Valve Center in Mainz, Germany

**Prof. Roland Hardt**

Head of the geriatrics service at the Johannes Gutenberg Hospital in Mainz, Germany

**Prof. Paolo Magni**

Professor of Pathology at the Università degli Studi di Milano
Member of the Board of the Italian Heart Foundation

**Dr. Emanuela Folco**

Secretary General and CEO, Giovanni Lorenzini Medical Foundation
Founder of the Italian Heart Foundation

**Dr. Jose Rodríguez-Roda Stuart**

Head of the Cardiovascular Surgery Unit, Hospital Ramón y Cajal
Vice President of the Spanish Society of Cardiovascular Surgery

**Prof Dr. Christophe Dubois**

Clinical head of the cardiovascular department at UZ Leuven
Secretary and treasurer of the Belgian Working Group on Interventional Cardiology

**Prof. Dr. José Luis Zamorano Gómez**

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**Daniel Colgan**

Patient Advocate

