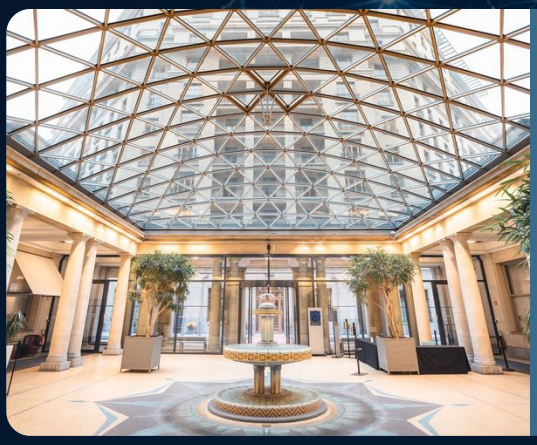
4 DECEMBER 2026 • BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN PATIENT SAFETY CONFERENCE 2026

PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

EUROPEAN PATIENT SAFETY FOUNDATION

09:00 09:15	**Welcome message**
09:15 09:30	**Opening message**
09:30 10:00	**Keynote lecture** Towards Safe and Resilient Healthcare Systems in Europe: From Strategy to Implementation
10:00 10:45	**Panel discussion: Governance** Bringing patient safety to the strategy table
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 12:00	**Panel discussion: Workforce wellbeing and empowerment** Workforce wellbeing and safety as a key pillar of resilient healthcare systems
12:00 12:45	**Butterfly Impact Award 2026** Small Actions, Big Changes in Patient Safety
12:45 – 13:45	Lunch break
13:45 14:30	**Panel discussion: Innovation** Closing the distance between the potential of innovation and delivered patient outcome
14:30 14:45	**Lecture** From perception to prevention: Bridging European healthcare leaders' perspectives with the insurer's view of risk
14:45 15:30	**Panel discussion: Learning culture and leadership** Building learning culture, from sector lessons to everyday practice
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 16:45	**Panel discussion: Patient and family involvement** Making patients and their families real partners in safer care
16:45 17:00	**Lecture: Preparedness** Patient Safety Under Fire: From Emergency Response to a Resilient Healthcare System – The UNBROKEN Experience
17:00 17:45	**Panel discussion** From Strategy to Implementation: What's next?
17:45 18:00	**Closing and thank you**



THIS YEAR'S VENUE

WELCOME TO BRUSSELS

Résidence Palace – International Press Centre

This sumptuous 1920s Art Deco building is situated a stone's throw from Rond-point Schuman in the heart of Brussels' European quarter.

155 Rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

Open in Google Maps

Virtual tour

Register now • conference.eupsf.org

Places are limited

With the participation and support of

The European Patient Safety Conference 2026 is made possible with the commitment of our Affiliates, the participation of organisations from our network and the support of our sponsors.

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With reference EMT-26-09688, the European Patient Safety Conference 2026 taking place on 4 December 2026 in Brussels, Belgium is COMPLIANT following the Ethical MedTech assessment.

Learn more

Register now at conference.eupsf.org
Places are limited

EUROPEAN PATIENT SAFETY FOUNDATION

TITLE

Towards Safe and Resilient Healthcare Systems in Europe: From Strategy to Implementation

THEME

Across Europe, healthcare systems are facing shared and growing vulnerabilities – including workforce fatigue and shortages, gaps in crisis preparedness, financial pressure and increasing complexity of care. These systemic pressures directly affect patient safety and clinical outcomes.

Over the past five years, through conferences and multi-stakeholder dialogue organised across Europe by the European Patient Safety Foundation, a clear pattern has emerged: preventable harm is rarely the result of isolated clinical errors alone. It is shaped by governance structures, workforce wellbeing, leadership culture, digital reliability and the overall resilience of healthcare systems.

In response, the EUPSF and its affiliates have initiated a collaborative development of a European Strategy for Safe and Resilient Healthcare Systems. Built on practical experience and cross-country exchange, the strategy moves beyond fragmented safety initiatives towards a coherent, system-based framework addressing the structural risk factors that influence daily practice.

This conference marks the transition from strategy to implementation and practice. Through structured panels, peer dialogue and contributions from affiliated organisations and invited experts, participants will examine how the strategy's key pillars — governance, workforce wellbeing and empowerment, innovation design and implementation, learning culture and leadership, and patient involvement — can be translated into concrete actions at institutional, national and European level.

By bringing together healthcare professionals, hospital leaders, policymakers, researchers, insurers, industry representatives and national patient safety platforms, the conference aims to foster alignment, strengthen coordinated efforts and support a more proactive and resilient approach to patient safety across Europe.

ORGANISED BY
European Patient Safety Foundation (EUPSF)
conference.eupsf.org

DATE
4 December 2026
Polak Room

VENUE
Résidence Palace – International Press Centre
155 Rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

DETAILED PROGRAMME

Polak Room

09:00
09:15

WELCOME MESSAGE

SPEAKER

Mrs. Mirka Cikkelova (Belgium), General Secretary of the European Patient Safety Foundation

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09:15
09:30

OPENING MESSAGE

Speakers to be confirmed

09:30
10:00

KEYNOTE LECTURE

Towards Safe and Resilient Healthcare Systems in Europe: From Strategy to Implementation

The lecture will set out why the EUPSF developed its European Strategy for Safe and Resilient Healthcare Systems, and how the conference is built on it. Each of the Strategy's five priorities anchors a panel session that unpacks its key messages, debates the EUPSF calls for action, and showcases inspiring initiatives already at work across the European patient safety community. It will invite all stakeholders to take the Strategy into their own spheres of influence and turn it into a programme of work shared across Europe.

MODERATOR

Mrs. Mirka Cikkelova (Belgium), General Secretary of the European Patient Safety Foundation

SPEAKER

Dr. Arnt Suckow (Germany), EUPSF President, Head of Quality, Risk Management & Internal Audit at TUM Klinikum Rechts der Isar, Munich

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10:00
10:45

PANEL DISCUSSION: GOVERNANCE

Bringing patient safety to the strategy table

The decisions that most shape patient safety — care pathways, staffing models, technology procurement, investment — are still rarely taken in the rooms where patient safety has a seat. In December 2024, WHO/Europe reported that only one Member State in three across the WHO European Region has a national action plan on patient safety; the 2009 EU Council Recommendation that frames the European response, meanwhile, is increasingly seen as due for an update.

The EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 calls for patient safety to become a standing strategic concern at every decision-making level, supported by the European, national and institutional plans and structures that turn that intention into reality.

The session will explore four complementary mechanisms for moving patient safety from operational concern to strategic priority — at international, national and institutional levels — and the possible tensions between them, in a panel discussion format.

MODERATOR

PD Dr. Sven Staender (Switzerland), EUPSF Advisory Board Member

SPEAKERS

- **Dr. Gundo Weiler (Denmark),** WHO Representative to Greece; Head of WHO Athens Office for Quality of Care and Patient Safety
- **Dr. Orla Healy (Ireland),** National Clinical Lead, National Quality and Patient Safety Office of HSE
- **Mrs. Vibeke Rischel (Denmark),** Deputy CEO and Head of Healthcare Improvement, Danish Society for Patient Safety (PS!)
- **Prof. Kris Vanhaecht (Belgium),** Quality and Patient Safety research group, Leuven Institute for Healthcare Policy (LIGB), KU Leuven; quality policy, UZ Leuven
- **Mrs. Carmella Steinke (Canada),** CEO, Health Quality Alberta

11:15
12:00

PANEL DISCUSSION: WORKFORCE WELLBEING AND EMPOWERMENT

Workforce wellbeing and safety as a key pillar of resilient healthcare systems

The interests of patients and healthcare professionals are intrinsically linked: a fatigued, demoralised or unsupported professional is a less safe one, and a professional who cannot speak up cannot contribute to safer care. After two and a half decades of asking individuals to be more vigilant in conditions of chronic understaffing, fatigue, aggression and second-victim trauma, the limits of that approach are now visible across European healthcare.

The EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 calls for the wellbeing of healthcare professionals to be treated as a core determinant of patient safety in every hospital strategy, supported by the European, institutional and professional policies, frameworks and structures that turn protection into practice.

The session will explore four levers for protecting HCP wellbeing in practice — political, occupational, institutional and professional — and ask how these levers, today often operating in parallel, could be made to work together, in a panel discussion format.

MODERATOR

Dr. Pernille Cedergreen (Denmark), Department of Anaesthesiology, Herlev Gentofte Hospital, Copenhagen; Butterfly Impact Award 2025 winner

SPEAKERS

- **Mr. Bogdan Deleanu (Belgium),** Brussels Liaison Manager, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)
- **Dr. Alessandra Spedicato (Italy),** European Federation of Salaried Doctors (FEMS)
- **Dr. Eva Potura (Austria),** Head of the Department for Quality Assurance and Patient Safety at the Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG) and Chair of the Austrian Second Victim Association
- **Prof. Dr. Theodoros Koutroubas (Greece),** Professor, UCLouvain; Director and Senior Policy Adviser, European Nursing Council (ENC); Director General and Senior Policy Adviser, European Council of the Liberal Professions (CEPLIS)
- **Mr. Josh Cobb (Belgium),** Secretary, European Biosafety Network (EBN)

12:00
12:45

BUTTERFLY IMPACT AWARD 2026

Small Actions, Big Changes in Patient Safety

MODERATORS

- **Mr. Pedro Vieira dos Santos (Portugal),** Vice-President of the European Patient Safety Foundation
- **Mrs. Penilla Gunther (Sweden),** Past-President of the European Patient Safety Foundation

AWARD OBJECTIVES

- To recognise the benefits of implemented innovative practices with evidence-based impact on patient safety
- To demonstrate that technology is not always needed and that patient safety can also be impacted by no-tech or low-tech approaches
- To promote exchange and mutual learning around those initiatives/projects

Three finalists will be invited to present their projects (5-7 min max). The audience will decide about the ranking through the interactive voting at the end of the session.

BUTTERFLY IMPACT AWARD
Small Actions, Big Changes IN PATIENT SAFETY

Discover the previous winners: www.eupsf.org/award

13:45
14:30

PANEL DISCUSSION: INNOVATION

Closing the distance between the potential of innovation and delivered patient outcome

Many evidence-based patient safety practices and proven innovations already exist; the challenge today is no longer to generate new knowledge but to ensure that safe and effective innovations actually reach the bedside, deliver their full potential and do not introduce new risks along the way. Across European healthcare, the distance between an innovation cleared for the market, an innovation safely implemented in a hospital, and an innovation actually used to improve patient outcomes remains substantial — and the EU regulatory environment for medical devices is itself in flux as the European Commission carries out its MDR/IVDR simplification work in 2026.

The EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 calls for the safer adoption of innovation to become a shared responsibility across the European patient safety community, supported by the regulatory, institutional and professional commitments and practices that close that distance.

The EUPSF Strategy then explores the question through four perspectives — each illuminating one segment of the gap between proven innovation and delivered patient outcome — in a panel discussion format.

MODERATOR

Ms. Kira Tosberg (Germany), Project Officer for Association Projects, Bundesverband Managed Care e.V. and EUPSF Individual Affiliate

SPEAKERS

- **Mrs. Flora Giorgio (Belgium),** Head of Unit, D3 Medical Devices, DG SANTE, European Commission
- **Dr. Pedro Gambús (Spain),** Anaesthesiologist, Hospital Clínic de Barcelona; Co-Founder & CEO, Predictheon
- **Ms. Viktória Ďurajová (Slovakia),** Project Manager for Research, Development and Innovation, F.D. Roosevelt University General Hospital of Banská Bystrica
- **Dr. Arnt Suckow (Germany),** EUPSF President, Head of Quality, Risk Management & Internal Audit at TUM Klinikum Rechts der Isar, Munich

Further speakers to be announced

14:30
14:45

LECTURE

From perception to prevention: Bridging European healthcare leaders' perspectives with the insurer's view of risk

Drawing on the findings of a prospective study conducted among healthcare executives and healthcare professionals across four European countries, this session will explore how those working within healthcare systems perceive today's and tomorrow's major risks. These insights will then be compared with Relyens' perspective as a specialist medical risk insurer, based on claims analysis, on-site risk assessments, and its understanding of the financial impact and cost of risk.

By confronting perceived risks with observed risks, the session will illustrate how insurers can contribute far beyond compensation. Through their unique understanding of risk trends, system vulnerabilities and the cost of adverse events, insurers can become key partners in helping healthcare organisations shift from reacting to incidents towards anticipating and preventing them.

MODERATOR

Mr. Stéphane Boulanger (Belgium), Policy Advisor, European Patient Safety Foundation

SPEAKER

Dr. Georges Romero (France), Medical Director, Risk Management at Relyens

14:45
15:30

PANEL DISCUSSION: LEARNING CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Building learning culture, from sector lessons to everyday practice

Healthcare has invested heavily in patient safety tools — incident reporting systems, root cause analysis, morbidity and mortality reviews, surgical checklists. Where the cultural conditions allow them to, they work. Where they do not, the same tools capture little, and best practices imported from elsewhere fail to take root. Without learning culture, even the best patient safety tools deliver little.

The EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 calls for learning culture to become the foundation of patient safety in European healthcare, supported by the leadership choices, professional practices and infrastructure that make learning routine.

The session will explore four complementary perspectives on how learning culture is actually built in European healthcare — from cross-sector lessons to everyday leadership choices — in a panel discussion format.

MODERATOR

Dr. Alexander Hoffelner (Austria), Paediatric Resident, Division of Neonatology, Paediatric Intensive Care and Neuropaediatrics, Medical University of Vienna

SPEAKERS

- **Mrs. Anna Modos (Czech Republic),** EUPSF Individual Affiliate; pilot and human factors specialist, formerly active in the medical device industry
- **Dr. Paula Pérez Caballero (Spain),** Consultant Anaesthesiologist, Hospital Universitari i Politècnic La Fe, Valencia, and Secretary of SENSAR (Spanish Reporting System for Patient Safety in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care)
- **Mr. Dieter Vyt (Belgium),** Artevelde University of Applied Sciences; Board Member and Treasurer, Dutch Society for Simulation in Healthcare (DSSH)
- **Ms. Deirdra Taylor (UK),** National Joint Registry at Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP)
- **Ms. Esther Espuñes (Spain),** President of the European Operating Room Nurses Association (EORNA)

16:00
16:45

PANEL DISCUSSION: PATIENT AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Making patients and their families real partners in safer care

The patient is the only person continuously present across their entire care pathway, and their information, attention and voice are among the most under-used resources in patient safety. The European Patients' Forum Barometer on the involvement of patient organisations in health policy reveals fewer than half of European countries with a formal framework for patient involvement, and what does exist is too often consultation rather than partnership.

The EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 calls for patient and family involvement to be recognised as a fundamental component of safe practice, supported by the tools, governance arrangements and post-harm support structures that move patients from being consulted to being full partners in safer care.

The session will explore four complementary perspectives on what it actually takes to move patient involvement from consultation to full partnership in European healthcare — from governance to the bedside to the moment after harm — in a panel discussion format.

MODERATOR

Mrs. Panagiota Tsikala (Austria), EUPSF Individual Affiliate

SPEAKERS

- **Ms. Anna Teufel (Austria),** Health Expert, Department for Quality Assurance and Patient Safety, Austrian National Public Health Institute (GÖG)
- **Mr. Konstantinos Chortis (Greece),** President, The Panhellenic Heart Disease Association
- **Dr. Tiago Villanueva (Portugal),** President, European Union of General Practitioners (UEMO)
- **Mrs. Michelle Bayona (Germany),** Lines Vermächtnis (Lines Legacy)
- **Prof. Dr. Ehrenfried Schindler (Germany),** Head of the Section for Paediatric Anaesthesiology, University Hospital Bonn

16:45
17:00

LECTURE: PREPAREDNESS

Patient Safety Under Fire: From Emergency Response to a Resilient Healthcare System – The UNBROKEN Experience

Building on shared insights from stakeholders active in the Ukrainian healthcare system since the start of the conflict, this lecture explores what it takes to keep healthcare safe and functioning under extreme conditions — and what those experiences teach the rest of European healthcare about preparing for shocks that are themselves predictable but highly disruptive: heatwaves, energy crises, supply disruptions, cyber-attacks. Where Ukrainian healthcare had no choice but to react under extreme conditions, the rest of Europe still has the chance to prepare proactively — a chance that must be taken urgently, drawing on the lessons learned in Ukraine. The capacity to anticipate, absorb and recover from shocks is itself part of what patient safety means.

MODERATOR

Mrs. Martina Antošová (Slovakia), President of the civic association Práve preto

SPEAKERS

- **Ms. Mariana Svirchuk (Ukraine),** Director of Development and Investment Engagement at the First Clinical Territorial Medical Union of Lviv and Director of the School of Medicine at UNBROKEN University
- **Dr. Dmytro Helyuta (Ukraine),** Medical Director, First Clinical Territorial Medical Union of Lviv (UNBROKEN)

17:00
17:45

PANEL DISCUSSION

From Strategy to Implementation: What's next?

Over the course of the day, the five priorities of the EUPSF Strategy 2026–2030 have been unpacked through the experience of those who carry them in the field. Their messages converge on a single conviction: that demonstrated change in one care setting, one team, one organisation, one country is what creates the conditions for change everywhere else — through emulation among peers, and through the political weight it gives policy-makers to act. The closing panel brings EUPSF Board members together to set out their own perspectives on what it will take to turn the Strategy from a document into a programme of work shared across Europe over 2026–2030, and on the role EUPSF can play to support the patient safety community in carrying it forward.

MODERATOR

Mrs. Mirka Cikkelova (Belgium), General Secretary, European Patient Safety Foundation

SPEAKERS

- **Dr. Arnt Suckow (Germany),** President, European Patient Safety Foundation
- **Mr. Pedro Vieira dos Santos (Portugal),** Vice-President, European Patient Safety Foundation
- **Mrs. Penilla Gunther (Sweden),** Past-President, European Patient Safety Foundation
- **Mrs. Doina Carmen Mazilu (Romania),** Board Member, European Patient Safety Foundation
- **Mr. Stéphane Boulanger (Belgium),** Policy Advisor, European Patient Safety Foundation

17:45
18:00

CLOSING AND THANK YOU

Programme as of 30 September 2026. Programme subject to change.