

Less packaging consumption at the Nordic hospitals is beneficial to the environment

Leads to a reduction in material consumption

Increases recycling

Enhances the use of recycled or renewable materials



The Danish regions will spread the **Nordic Criteria for More Sustainable Hospital Packaging** to all of Europe

Hospitals are major consumers of packaging for healthcare products ranging from knee implants to white coats and syringes. This results in huge volumes of waste. Each year, the plastic proportion in Denmark alone, is estimated at approximately 4,000 tonnes (2019). This equals the average annual amount of plastic waste from about 75,000 households.

The Danish regions seek to reduce packaging consumption within the Danish healthcare system. Such reduction may take place by making particular demands with respect to the regions' procurement of products and equipment. Together with colleagues from Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, the Danish regions have thus developed a set of **'Nordic Criteria for More Sustainable Packaging'** pertaining to products for the healthcare sector. Now, the regions intend to disseminate these environment criteria to the rest of Europe.

The Danish regions' environmental criteria underpin European objectives aiming to **enhance circular economy** and, hence, reducing our need to tap into the planet's resources.

A voluntary approach

The environmental criteria can be incorporated into relevant tender invitations to suppliers in future provisions of equipment and products for the hospitals. They comprise:

- A guide on the use of the criteria, targeted at tender/procurement consultants
- A library of criteria divided into three levels: i) basic, ii) advanced and iii) spearhead criteria
- A score model facilitating the comparison of packaging's environmental footprint across suppliers

By late 2021, the regions initiated the use of the new environmental criteria. Towards the summer of 2022, these criteria had been used with respect to tenders constituting **a contract amount totalling around 121 mio. Euro** (for the entire contract period). This, for instance, applies to tenders concerning:

- Paper wipes and couch paper
- Ostomy products
- Infusion and transfusion sets
- Knee implants
- Minimal invasive surgery
- Rinsing fluids

“The environment wins when more countries consume less packaging at their hospitals.”



Anders Kühnau,
Chairman of
Danish Regions

“The criteria are cut-and-dried for the rest of Europe.”

The delegation to Nordic Council, chairman Bertel Haarder, feature in the Danish daily, Børsen, 6 July 2022.

“Such procurement criteria sends a strong and clear message to the market: that the health sector desires more sustainable products and packaging.”

Healthcare Without Harm, Andrea Zotinca, Project Manager for Circular Economy, about the regions' environmental criteria. Børsen, 19 April 2022.

“A significant step as, by simple initiatives, we can make a considerable difference”

The Danish Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry, Functional Manager for Clinical Trials and the Production of Medicinal Products, Jakob Bjerg Larsen, on the criteria, News

“Globally marketed in its packaging, the product must meet the demands of many countries, which is why getting in touch with the entire European market is absolutely the right thing to do.”

The Pharmaceutical Industry, Political Editor, Kim Michael Christiansen, Børsen, 19 April 2022.

“(...) it seems like a good place to start; voluntary criteria which procurement officers can incorporate where it fits in with the context of the individual tender.”

Affalds- og Ressourceindustrien (Danish Waste and Resource Industry), Head of Secretariat, Niels Bukholt on the increased focus on public green procurement and on putting it into practice. CleanTechWatch, 13 July 2022.

Learn more on regions.dk/emballage