

# The Healthcare System in Belgium in 2029



**DR. MARC NOPPEN**  
CEO UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL UZ BRUSSEL  
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT  
BRUSSEL



## Challenges

The major challenges/threats are probably similar for most if not all Western (and increasingly also global) hospitals – and by extension: healthcare systems. They include (but are not limited to) Demographic Changes (increased life expectancy with an increasing burden of chronic diseases and multimorbidity), HR challenges (elderly workforce with increasing staff shortages, work overload, burnout, etc.), and budgetary challenges (all things remaining equal, the demographic changes alone will need a 1 to 2% absolute annual increase in healthcare budgets).

## Opportunities

Studies (in various countries) show that 20 to 30 % of the annual healthcare expenditure is actually waste, due to inefficiencies in healthcare systems, wrong (financial) incentives, administrative burden, fraud, inadequate data sharing, etc. This is the major issue, but probably the most difficult to achieve: to overhaul healthcare systems. Hence, there is no magic bullet, and many issues have to be tackled simultaneously.

A second major (long-term) game changer might be the shift from “sick-care” to “health-care”, with increasing emphasis on keeping good health. Here, a predictive “personalized approach on a population health basis” paradigm using genet-

ics, IOT, data sensing and capitation, artificial intelligence, deep learning, etc. together with an increased emphasis on lifestyle changes are necessary.

Finally, “general hospitals” with 40+ specialties addressing at least seven different “business modes” at the same time (preventive medicine, A&E medicine, outpatient single-stop shop medicine, planned interventions, multimorbidity care, long-term care and rehab, and complex cases) are probably no longer sustainable.

## Uncertainties

In most countries, single hospitals alone cannot change an entire system. The main challenge will be to mobilize enough political and societal power to redesign a system. And this will always be difficult, because everybody is convinced that change is needed, but nobody wants to change.

## About the Belgian Hospital Association

The Belgian Hospital Association aims to contribute to the development and progress of hospital science. It particularly focuses on the improvement of the management and organization of healthcare facilities, through the dissemination of publications, the organization of study meetings and conferences.

**ASIAN HOSPITAL & MANAGEMENT**  
**Healthcare**  
TOWARDS THE **LIMITLESSNESS** OF Healthcare Businesses Globally  
[Simple, to the point & relevant to today's healthcare businesses!]

**LATEST ISSUE**  
**Subscribe NOW**

Subscribe to grab your **FREE COPY** today.  
Available in hard copy and e-book format.

**ASIAN HOSPITAL & MANAGEMENT**  
**Healthcare**  
Nursing  
Building a future-ready workforce

www.asianhnm.com

Email: [subscriptions@asianhnm.com](mailto:subscriptions@asianhnm.com) | Email: [advertise@asianhnm.com](mailto:advertise@asianhnm.com) | Tel: +91 40 4961 4567