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March 3, 2022

Statement by the European Children's Hospitals Organisation on the needs of children in Ukraine with complex medical needs

Armed conflicts, such as the current war in Ukraine, threaten the health and safety of all children and young people. According to UNICEF, "the situation for children caught up in the conflict in Ukraine grows worse by the minute."

Children and young people with complex or acute medical needs, as well as the healthcare professionals who care for them, are especially vulnerable during an armed conflict. These children are uniquely dependent on specialized medical technology and staff and may be unable to evacuate a conflict zone. Ukraine's largest children's hospital is located in Kyiv, which continues to see heavy fighting. Staff are continuing to care for patients, but they face shortages of essential medicines, food, and water.

The European Children's Hospitals Organisation (ECHO) supports calls for a cessation in hostilities to ensure life-saving humanitarian aid can reach those in need, and that critically ill children and young people requiring complex medical care can be safely moved out of the conflict zone.

We also call on the European Commission, EU Member States, and neighboring countries to support Ukrainian children and families fleeing the conflict zone who will require the intensive and specialized care capability of children's hospitals.

ECHO members stand ready to support our colleagues at children's hospitals in Ukraine and to work with the European Commission and national health authorities to ensure children and families arriving at our borders receive the specialized healthcare they need.