



PRESS RELEASE

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One Year of PVC Medical Recycling in Belgium

One year ago, VinylPlus®, the European PVC industry's Commitment to sustainable development, launched VinylPlus® Med at the Brussels based Europe Hospitals, a programme aimed at sorting and recycling single-use PVC medical devices. This initiative helps the hospitals to significantly reduce their environmental impact and operating costs.

VinylPlus® Med

VinylPlus® Med is a project between various European partners, bringing together hospitals, waste management companies, recyclers and the PVC industry (VinylPlus) who join forces to accelerate sustainability in healthcare. In Belgium, the project gathers the waste management company Renewi who takes care of the waste transport and the intermediate storage and Raff Plastics, an important player in Belgian plastic recycling, who sorts and grinds the waste. The recycled PVC is then supplied to a converter who will process it into new hospital applications: floor and wall coverings, yoga mats, shoe soles, equipment for rehabilitation, All Belgian Vinylplus® partners are located within a radius of 200 km, to minimise transport and thus mitigate carbon footprint.

The Europe Hospitals

The Europe Hospitals quickly and enthusiastically responded to VinylPlus' call to train its staff in efficiently sorting single-use PVC medical devices in 3 departments at 2 sites: the operating room, the intensive care unit and a service care unit. "We realised that our hospital, like other hospitals in Belgium, is a major polluter," admits Evelyn Vass, Operational Director at the Europe Hospitals. "We started recycling PVC thanks to the VinylPlus® Med project with the wish to continue in other sectors and to become a recognised green hospital within our Brussels network. Currently, the 'minor gestures' of the staff consist of some precise manipulations of the material eligible for collection and recycling. The single-use, non-contaminated PVC medical devices, which do not contain phthalates, are divided into 3 categories: tubes, oxygen masks and IV bags. Before, everything used to be incinerated."

A promising project

Launched more than 10 years ago and operational in 8 countries, PVC medical recycling is a première in Belgium thanks to VinylPlus® Med. "We have contacts with all these countries to bring together the experience and expertise they have gained," explains Brigitte Dero, Managing Director at VinylPlus. "So we didn't start from scratch. We want to improve the process and expand this project to as many hospitals as possible in the country. We estimate the potential recyclable volume at 1,000 tonnes per year, which represents about a third of the PVC used in Belgian hospitals each year."

The interest in VinylPlus® Med and the awareness of environmental responsibility continue to expand in the healthcare sector. In the past 12 months, 10 hospitals joined VinylPlus® Med and 35 hospitals are now willing to join this recycling programme in 2023.

For more information, go to www.vinylplusmed.eu or [Watch the video](#).

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