

Press release

Three years of WeACT Con: Sustainability in the healthcare sector - much achieved, much still to do

Healthcare industry discusses solutions for greater climate and environmental protection at WeACT Con 2025

Berlin, May 7, 2025

For the third time this year, stakeholders from the entire healthcare sector came together at the EUREF-Campus in Berlin to jointly develop solutions for a more climate-friendly and sustainable healthcare system. Despite the current difficult conditions, the WeACT Con participants agreed that the sustainability turnaround cannot wait for good weather. To this end, they brought along many practical examples of how things can be done better today.

The healthcare sector is under enormous cost pressure, and public interest in climate protection and sustainability has waned. **Prof. Alena Buyx**, Professor of Ethics in Medicine at the Technical University of Munich and **former Chair of the German Ethics Council**, was nevertheless confident at WeACT Con: "We are ahead of the wave - attention will return." Now is the time to build on our own strengths. One of these strengths lies in the **high level of trust** that doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals enjoy - and that makes them credible and effective ambassadors for climate protection and sustainability.

Healthcare professions have a special responsibility for sustainability

Kerstin Blum, Managing Director of Gesunde Erde – Gesunde Menschen, also pointed this out: "The healthcare sector has a special opportunity to be a driving force in the discussion about the preservation of our livelihoods. Because all the changes that are needed for the health of the planet also benefit our own health. We can have a better - and healthier - life." Sustainability often goes hand in hand with better health, especially when it comes to nutrition, urban planning or mobility, so there are many co-benefits.

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Sustainability and cost-effectiveness often go hand in hand

The participants at the WeACT Con agreed that the cost pressure on the healthcare system should no longer be an excuse to make the healthcare system itself more sustainable. After all, sustainability and profitability often go hand in hand. "To say in general terms that sustainability is not economical is not true. There are many examples where sustainability is also economically viable. We would like to have more scope to try things like this out. We have many starting points for becoming more sustainable in the healthcare sector," explained **Dr. Gertrud Demmler, Board Member of SBK Siemens-Betriebskrankenkasse**. Take prevention, for example: it's not only best from a medical and ecological point of view if people don't fall ill in the first place - it's also the cheapest

Beyond borders: International plenum

The motto of this year's WeACT Con was "Thinking and acting beyond borders". For the first time, there was also a plenary session for international best practice examples. Global health policy is currently facing enormous challenges, as **Prof. Ilona Kickbusch, Chair of the Global Health Centre in Geneva and one of the leading voices in international health policy, reported**. "There is a lack of international consensus on central values such as justice, human rights and women's rights - this makes cooperation considerably more difficult," said Kickbusch. The withdrawal of the USA has forced the World Health Organization (WHO) to cut its budget by around half.

Nevertheless, numerous presentations by international experts from countries such as Ireland, France and Belgium showed that there is reason for hope. New initiatives are emerging all over the world that are learning from each other and making progress together.

Charles Flahault from France, for example, presented a guideline that enables a simplified life cycle assessment for medicines - an innovative approach in the fight against the ecological footprint of the healthcare system. The background of the **Ella Roberta Foundation** from the United Kingdom is tragic: **Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah** is using it to campaign for clean air and health justice after her daughter died as a result of air pollution.

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WeACT Con 2025: between "sustainability fatigue" and a spirit of optimism

Although - or precisely because - the general conditions are currently difficult, the WeACT Con exuded a spirit of optimism. After all, there are many examples where sustainability has already become a much more integral part of everyday life in the healthcare sector than was the case last year. These include clinics that are switching to sustainable and healthy nutrition. But there are also many small and large cooperative initiatives that are demonstrating solutions.

Reaching hearts and minds: Sustainability must be explained

The challenges of promoting more sustainability in the healthcare sector remain great against the backdrop of increasingly polarized social debates. **Dr. Mirjam Jenny**, Scientific Director at the Institute for Planetary Health Behaviour at the University of Erfurt, explained in this context: "The majority do not know that they are the majority. Contrary to what is often suggested, the majority would like to see more climate protection - it is only too rarely made visible. **Kerstin Blum** summed up the motto of the **WeACT Con**: "We have to open doors, reach hearts and minds and motivate people to act."

Many participants, more program: WeACT Con continues to grow

Around 200 participants from the medical profession, clinics and pharmacies, health insurance companies and associations as well as experts from science, business and politics took the opportunity at WeACT Con to network, exchange ideas and develop new ones. With workshops, symposia, panel discussions, an international plenary session, many presentations and interactive discussion formats, the WeACT Con program has grown once again compared to the previous year. WeACT Con took place on May 6 & 7, 2025 at the EUREF-Campus in Berlin.

"It is important that we stay on the ball, even in times when public perception is not focusing on sustainability and climate protection. We are very proud that WeACT Con continues to establish itself as a leading congress on the topics of health, the environment and sustainability and that we can send a positive signal to the industry," says **Dr. Sandra Kluge**, Head of Communications & Health Policy and company spokesperson at Chiesi Germany. The Italian family-owned company **Chiesi** initiated the WeACT Con and organized it together with strong partners.

Further information on WeACT Con can be found at www.weactcon.de .

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You can download **the latest press photos** from WeACT Con 2025 at the following link: <https://www.weactcon.de/presse-news/presse>

Save the Date: WeACT Con 2026

The WeACT Con takes place annually. As a leading congress for the topics of environmental and climate protection in the healthcare sector, it offers a place for long-term networking and interprofessional discussions. A date for the follow-up event has already been set: WeACT Con is scheduled to take place again in 2026 on May 6 & 7 at the EUREF-Campus in Berlin.

When: May 6 and 7, 2026

Where: EUREF-Campus Berlin (Torgauer Str. 1-25, 10829 Berlin)

Why is Chiesi initiating the WeACT Con?

As a **B Corp-certified company**, Chiesi is committed to assuming social responsibility in addition to its corporate goals. Sustainability is one of the most important tasks for all players in the healthcare sector.

Chiesi actively supports the transformation towards a sustainable and climate-friendly healthcare system: by promoting networks, creating spaces for debate and highlighting examples of best practice. With the **WeACT Con**, Chiesi offers a forum for this.

Chiesi GmbH in

Hamburg-based Chiesi GmbH employs around 400 people across Germany. As one of the largest sales companies in the Chiesi Group (headquartered in Parma, Italy), it generated a turnover of 368.4 million euros in 2024. In 2024, the medium-sized company was recognized as a Top Employer by the Top Employer Institute for the thirteenth time in a row, and in 2020 it also received the "Great Place to Work" certification for the first time

Further information at www.chiesi.de

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