



Meet
Health.
Future.
People.

MEDICA
16–19 Nov. 2026
Düsseldorf,
Germany

Press release

Power cuts, cyberattacks, crisis response: these topics are at the heart of the 1st German Health Resilience Conference

New conference at MEDICA puts resilience into practice – initial programme highlights and speakers confirmed

Pandemics, cyberattacks, extreme weather events, geopolitical conflicts or widespread power cuts: the number of potential stress scenarios for the healthcare system is on the rise. However, hospitals, emergency services, care homes and public authorities must remain capable of functioning even under exceptional conditions. With the 1st German Health Resilience Conference, this forward-looking topic will have its own dedicated platform for the first time as part of MEDICA 2026 in Düsseldorf (16–19 November); numerous high-profile speakers and key agenda items have already been confirmed.

The new conference is curated and organised jointly by Messe Düsseldorf and the German Health Alliance (GHA), with support from the industry association SPECTARIS. With its stage programme taking place at the heart of the MEDICA event (in Hall 11), it focuses on the question of how the resilience of the healthcare system can be strengthened: from strategic policy issues through to concrete practical experiences. The focus is on the interaction between all stakeholders throughout the care chain.

This German-language conference enriches the strategic development of MEDICA by adding a perspective that is becoming increasingly important in the face of growing global uncertainties. The focus is not only on managing acute crisis situations, but also on the long-term ability of healthcare systems to adapt to changing conditions and ensure the provision of care in the long term.



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From societal resilience to the crisis resilience of hospitals

The programme covers a wide range of topics, from societal and political issues to operational challenges in everyday hospital life. Right from the start, the question will be raised as to how well Germany is prepared for various risk scenarios and what expectations the public and institutions have of a resilient healthcare system.

Speakers include Prof. Dr Alexander Fekete from Cologne University of Applied Sciences, who has been engaged in risk and resilience research for many years. “I am motivated by the prospect of strengthening resilience across various disciplines and in key areas such as health. I hope the conference will facilitate a discussion on how to achieve health resilience,” says Fekete.



In addition to societal resilience, the conference will also examine particularly vulnerable population groups, local support networks and the role of civil society. Several presentations will address health vulnerability, community resilience and the question of how citizens and family carers can help stabilise care systems in crisis situations.

When the power goes out: blackout scenarios as a stress test for care provision

The example of large-scale power cuts illustrates just how quickly critical infrastructure can come under pressure. Such scenarios affect far more than just energy suppliers; they have a direct impact on medical facilities, care homes, pharmacies and emergency services.

Karsten Göwecke, Senior Fire Director in Berlin, will address this complex of issues using a large-scale blackout scenario as an example: “Prolonged power cuts are a scenario that leads to complex challenges for the entire

healthcare system, from outpatient care right through to maintaining the operational capability of a hospital. In my presentation, I will share many insights into how even simple measures can significantly increase resilience and minimise disruptions.”

Such practical examples illustrate the conference’s aim of combining strategic discussions with concrete recommendations for action. Alongside technical and organisational issues, alarm and operational planning, emergency communication and the safeguarding of critical resources play an important role.

Between KRITIS protection, cyber risks and real-life crisis experiences

Another key focus is on the protection of critical infrastructure and the question of how resilient existing protection concepts actually are. The agenda addresses current challenges – ranging from IT failures and cyber-attacks to natural disasters or crisis-induced supply bottlenecks.

Particular attention is likely to be paid to a panel discussion that deliberately focuses on real-life events and compares experiences from actual crisis situations with theoretical planning.

André Solarek, Head of the Crisis Management Unit at Charité (Berlin University Medical Centre), will contribute the perspective of a university hospital: “My talk will focus on how we can make hospitals more resilient to crises: from electricity and water supplies through to IT security, physical security and clear structures for crisis management. Drawing on our experience, I will outline very practical steps that any hospital can take tomorrow. My aim is for everyone to go home with a clear ‘next-step plan’.”

These perspectives will be complemented by presentations on hospital alert and operational planning, clinical disaster medicine, the reliability of digital systems, and the requirements for resilient hospital structures.

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Health resilience as a collective endeavour

The conference topics deliberately extend beyond ‘traditional’ issues of hospital, public health and disaster management. Outpatient care, care homes, pharmacies, laboratories, public administration, aid organisations and the German Armed Forces are also included in the discussion. This fosters an interdisciplinary exchange that brings together diverse responsibilities and experiences.

The 1st German Health Resilience Conference thus sees itself as a platform for those who consider the security of care not only under normal conditions, but also in situations where established processes reach their limits. It creates a framework in which strategies, experiences and solutions are brought together to strengthen the resilience of the healthcare system in the long term.

“With the launch of this conference, MEDICA 2026 is focusing on a topic that will be equally relevant in future for healthcare institutions, politics, industry and society: the ability to remain operational even under exceptional pressures,” sums up Carmen Berger, MEDICA’s programme director at Messe Düsseldorf.

The conference language is German. Full details of the 1st German Health Resilience Conference are available online: <https://www.medica-tradefair.com/ghrc2>.

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