

Essity Aktiebolag (publ)
Box 200, 101 23 Stockholm

Essity response to the European Commission's European Care Strategy

Essity is a leading global hygiene and health company with sales in approximately 150 countries and about 46,000 employees (about 1/3rd in the EU). Our products and services support individuals' hygiene and health through their lives and contribute to protect health care workers. We welcome the European Commission's initiative to strengthen access to high quality care for Europeans in all stages of life.

Preventive policies and support in long-term care

Essity believes it is important that the long-term care strategy focuses on preventive policies and actions to improve conditions in care homes. Cleaning in long term care is crucial for reducing infections. The pandemic has made it evident that long term care systems have major flaws in infection prevention, education and lack of hygiene and personal protective equipment (PPE) products. Essity recommends:

1. **Improved infection prevention and control:** This includes to secure availability of hygiene and PPE products in care homes, easy to use hygiene systems, training and education for staff to secure adherence to hand hygiene guidelines and minimize healthcare associated infections, and digital apps and services to support good hand hygiene.
2. **Improved cleaning:** Reducing healthcare associated infections in care homes can save lives. Introducing digitalized real-time cleaning services save cleaning staff time and efforts and improve cleaning quality. An example is Tork Vision Cleaning that helps cleaners to identify when and where cleaning is needed, reducing redundant tasks like dispenser checks and improves staff satisfaction.

The strategy should include recommendations for people needing care for conditions such as incontinence. Incontinence is classified by the WHO as a set of diseases, but is still a condition with a stigma. It is often a chronic condition, and most people rely on toileting and absorbent products to manage it. However, the ability to manage the condition can become difficult at older age due to e.g., immobility, poor eyesight or cognition and lowers quality of life if not well supported.

Supporting persons with incontinence requires a person-centred approach, which also ensures more efficient resource use and less environmental impact. Digital Health Technology (DHT) helps to address this need and can improve the outcome for persons with the condition, their care givers, care providers and the society at large, creating a shared value. Read more in the linked [Essity report Shared value: Self-management of incontinence](#). Several DHT solutions supporting continence care are available and further developed. TENA Identifi, an assessment solution, saves costs and improves life quality by creating person-centred toileting assistance schemes and recommending the right absorbent product. The TENA SmartCare change indicator is another example supporting care givers when the person they care for can't reliably express their needs to have their absorbent pad changed.

Improve hygiene and health in childcare

It is important at an early stage of life to learn and practice hygiene routines. Many young children close together is challenging from a hygiene perspective and improved hand hygiene and other protocols are necessary. Essity also calls for strengthening infection control in childcare to minimize antibiotics use and keep children, staff, and parents healthy, hence recommending:

- **Educating** not only staff and parents but also children in hand hygiene improves hygiene levels and lowers staff turnover. Digital tools like educational and hand hygiene apps for children help them understand when, how and why to wash their hands.
- **Improved cleaning routines** are necessary to keep childcare facilities hygienic.
- Having **the right hygiene and cleaning products available** e.g., hygiene dispensers at the right height so children can wash their hands on their own and save staff time.

Essity breaks barriers to well-being and contributes to a healthy, sustainable, and circular society. We look forward to further support with our expertise and knowledge.

Anna Brodowsky, Vice President Public Affairs Essity

anna.brodowsky@essity.com

Sofia Krigsman, Director Public Affairs Essity

sofia.krigsman@essity.com