The 5th Hybrid Forum "THE HOSPITAL IN TRANSITION – Challenges and Prospects in Modern Management" concluded with great success: Review of Proceedings and Conclusions

The **5th Hybrid Forum for Innovating Healthcare Management concluded with great success** on Monday, 2 November 2026, at the Divani Caravel Hotel. It was co-organised by the Hellenic Society for Health Services Management (EEDYY) and CMT Prooptiki. This year's Forum, titled "The Hospital in Transition – Challenges and Prospects in Modern Management", focused on the challenges facing the modern hospital and what it needs in order to transform. It highlighted the need to move from managing individual organisations to more coordinated, effective and people-centred systems of care. The discussion centred on the use of data and technology, the quality and safety of services, the effective management of resources, and new models of organising and delivering care that respond to citizens' changing needs.

The Forum was structured around three thematic sessions and two Round Tables. They covered digital transformation and data-driven management, quality and safety in hospital management, and the transition from planning to the sustainable implementation of new models of care.

The Forum is part of the long-standing effort of the Hellenic Society for Health Services Management and CMT Prooptiki to advance scientific knowledge and modern approaches to health services management. It strengthens the link between theory and practice and the dialogue between the scientific community, managers, policymakers and patient representatives. Through five consecutive Forums, EEDYY and CMT Prooptiki seek to do more than highlight challenges: they aim to help shape evidence-based, realistic and practical approaches to improving health services.

Welcome addresses were delivered by Mr Apostolos Letsios, President of the Hellenic Society for Health Services Management (EEDYY); Mr Giorgos Pierrakos, Professor at the Department of Business Administration, University of West Attica; and Mr Giorgos Charalambous, President of the National Centre for Emergency Care (EKAB).

The Deputy Minister of Health, Ms Irene Agapidaki, sent a welcome message. She congratulated the organisers on establishing the Forum as an institution for dialogue on health services management. She stressed that the discussion about the modern hospital is not limited to infrastructure and equipment. It concerns how services are organised, how resources are used, how staff are supported and how the system responds to citizens' needs. She noted that digital transformation is a tool, not an end in itself. A strong National Health System (ESY) cannot rely on hospitals alone; it needs strong Primary Health Care, better links between services and investment in prevention, so that citizens are guided and receive continuous care. According to figures she cited, more than 7 million citizens have had free preventive screenings through the "PROLAMVANO" programme. She also said that prevention is being established as a permanent national health policy, with €300 million in national funding through 2030. She concluded that no transformation can succeed without the people who work in the health system.

In total, approximately 360 people took part in the Forum, excluding speakers and the CMT organising team. According to the organisers' viewing data, online viewers watched for an average of about 4 hours and 29 minutes, and the broadcast peaked at 237 concurrent viewers.

SESSION 1 – Digital Transformation and Data-Driven Management

The first session was moderated by Mr Michalis Papadakis, Deputy Director of Organisation and IT at the Onassis Hospital. It focused on critical digital infrastructure and the conditions needed to use data for management and care.

Mr Giorgos Dafoulas, Special Advisor on Digital Health at the Ministry of Digital Governance and Artificial Intelligence, presented three topics:

- the Recovery Fund investments for the digital leap of the ESY, including RIS/PACS and a national digital maturity standard for hospitals
- the European Health Data Space deadlines for the primary and secondary use of data
- the need for European independence in data, computing power and artificial intelligence

Mr Nikos Iosif, Founder and CEO of BRAINS Innovative Consulting Services, argued that delivering a project is only the beginning. Processes, ongoing user training and collaboration between IT and clinicians are also needed. He cited e-prescribing as an example of a clear process and concluded that "the patient's information must travel together with the patient."

Dr Giorgos Gourzoulidis, Managing Partner & Co-Founder of Health Through Evidence, covered three topics:

- the use of Real-World Data, and the potential of its secondary use for health technology assessment and reimbursement decisions
- the role of hospitals as centres for managing reliable data
- the prerequisites for using artificial intelligence: reliable data, standardised recording and staff training

The first session showed that the digital transformation of hospitals is not just about installing new information systems. It requires a unified, interoperable and reliable data ecosystem, in which information is available when it is needed for care, management and decision-making.

Interoperability in practice is a critical issue. Technical connection alone is not enough. It also requires:

- common coding systems and standards
- clear responsibilities at every stage
- testing in real workflows
- continuous checks on the quality of information

Information must follow patients along their entire pathway. The next care team must be able to access it without re-entry, delays or fragmented records.

The secondary use of data and Real-World Data can turn everyday clinical and administrative information into evidence on the effectiveness, cost and value of interventions. Making this possible requires:

- data linkage at the level of the patient and the care episode, with appropriate personal data safeguards

- a common time frame
- clearly defined outcomes
- checks on completeness and quality
- a clear framework for governance and access

Artificial intelligence emerged as an important tool for supporting clinical decisions, documentation, managing patient flow and capacity, and using unstructured clinical information. Its adoption, however, must come with local evaluation, human oversight, monitoring of performance and safety, and ongoing user training.

Overall, the session's shared message was that digital investments create value when data becomes usable information, and information becomes evidence-based decisions.

SESSION 2 – Quality, Safety and Modern Hospital Management

The second session was moderated by Mr Nektarios Papavasileiou, Governor of the 7th Health Region of Crete. It focused on quality as a core part of modern health services management.

Ms Daphne Kaitelidou, Professor of Health Services Management at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), presented leadership and governance as prerequisites for quality. This means:

- a strategy translated into specific targets and accountability
- measuring and publishing indicators
- patient involvement
- an evaluation framework that includes the improvement cycle (PDSA)

Dr Christos Triantafyllou, Programme Officer for Quality of Care and Patient Safety at the World Health Organization, and Ms Artemis Markatou, Manager, Healthcare Strategy at CMT Prooptiki, presented Health-IQ and the "Quality for All" platform. They also presented the findings from mapping the data flows: common definitions, training and support for health units, checks and feedback, and digital maturity.

Ms Olga Siskou, Assistant Professor of Health Economics at the University of Piraeus, described what poor care coordination costs along the patient pathway: inequalities, wasted resources and lower trust in the system.

Dr Ourania (Rania) Pinaka, General Practitioner and Coordinator of the Ampelokipoi Local Health Unit (TOMY) in Larissa, presented good practices from the 5th Health Region. These included early diagnosis of dementia and depression through organised referrals and back-referrals, and vaccination coverage in a vulnerable community.

Dr Pantelis Messaropoulos, Chairman of the Board of KETEKNY, presented how DRGs have evolved into a financing and management tool, with efficiency indicators for hospitals. He also described their extension to private clinics and to mental health.

The second session showed that quality and safety are not separate hospital functions. They are core elements of governance, accountability and everyday management. The following are critical for moving from isolated improvement initiatives to a lasting culture of quality and organisational learning:

- strong leadership
- a clear quality strategy
- meaningful stakeholder involvement
- systematic use of data

Greece has already built significant institutional and technical foundations. These include the National Quality Strategy, the development of standards, indicators and evaluation frameworks, and their application in hospitals. The next challenge is to move from planning and pilots to systematic implementation, monitoring and measurable improvement at the national level.

Quality was also directly linked to the patient pathway through the health system. The following burden both patients and the operation and cost of services:

- fragmented referrals
- repeated tests
- delays
- no clearly assigned responsibility for coordinating care

A referral should be treated as a complete process, with a clear clinical question, appropriate prioritisation, feedback and confirmation that care continues.

Particular importance was given to Primary Health Care as a stable point of reference and coordination. Speakers also stressed three needs:

- developing the role of the patient navigator
- better links between primary care and hospitals
- ongoing training of health professionals

DRGs and hospitalisation data can be valuable tools for management, efficiency and benchmarking. This holds only if clinical documentation is complete, coding is correct and the severity of each case is recorded reliably.

Overall, the second session showed that modern hospital management must treat quality, safety, efficiency and patient experience as interdependent dimensions of effective health services. A hospital cannot be evaluated only on financial or quantitative measures. The evaluation must also cover the quality of care, safety, accessibility and actual patient outcomes. In this context, reliable indicators, DRGs and modern management tools add real value when they support evidence-based decisions, better use of available resources and continuous improvement of services.

SESSION 3 – Transformation in Practice: From Planning to Sustainable Implementation

The third session was moderated by Mr Nikos Polyzos, Professor of Health Services Management and Organisation at the Democritus University of Thrace. It shifted the focus from planning to the actual implementation of reforms and new models of care.

International experience was presented in two talks on hospital transformation in Romania. Mr Giorgos Angelopoulos, Consultant at the WHO Athens Office on Quality of Care and Patient Safety, presented the Pay for Quality programme, with 25 quality indicators piloted in six public hospitals. Dr Grațiela-Denisa Iordache, Coordinator of the Project Implementation Unit at Romania's National Authority for Quality Management in Health, described how a culture of quality was built, with the patient as the final judge. The main elements were:

- hospital accreditation
- quality units in hospitals
- a national strategy for quality and patient safety

In the keynote address, Dr Eleftherios Thireos, Head of the General Directorate of ODIPY and President of the Athens Medical Society, presented three topics:

- the common framework for evaluating hospital quality: self-assessment, site visits by assessment teams, indicators and patient experience
- the new institutional framework, with a quality observatory and adverse event reporting
- the transition to a patient-centred model of care

His central message was that quality is a permanent organisational priority, built on measurement, evaluation and continuous improvement.

Round Table: "New Models of Care Organisation and Delivery"

The Round Table "New Models of Care Organisation and Delivery" brought together:

- Ms Olga Balaoura, Governor of the 1st Health Region
- Ms Kyriaki Mystakidou, Professor of Palliative Care at NKUA
- Ms Paraskevi Michalopoulou, President of the Panhellenic Association of Women with Breast Cancer "Alma Zois"
- Dr Dimitris Kounalakis, General/Family Medicine Physician
- Mr Anastasios Samouilidis, Head of Public Affairs at the Greek Patients' Association

The discussion highlighted specific areas of implementation.

Palliative care. A legal framework was passed in 2022 and a National Action Plan exists. Putting them into practice, however, requires:

- palliative care units in major hospitals, with appropriate funding

- direct links with Primary Health Care and social services
- training and specialisation of health professionals

Speakers noted that palliative care is not limited to cancer patients. It also concerns people with serious or progressive illnesses and complex support needs, and it can be part of treatment from the early stages of the disease, depending on the patient's needs.

Primary Care. The issues raised were fragmented services, poor communication after hospital discharge, the role and pay of the personal doctor, and the need for evaluation and incentives.

Oncology. The network of Comprehensive Breast Centres in seven public hospitals was presented. It uses standardised procedures, protocols and quality indicators, and introduces new roles such as the data manager and the breast cancer nurse (nurse navigator).

The discussion also highlighted the need to relieve Emergency Departments. This means better links with Primary Health Care and directing non-urgent cases to the appropriate level of care. Patient representatives pointed to the difficulty of getting appointments, the need for user-friendly platforms and the need to make use of data from prevention programmes. They also stressed the role of the personal doctor as a guide, and of patient associations in helping patients navigate the system.

The key issues that emerged from the discussion were:

- continuing and improving digital transformation
- integrating quality across all functions and levels of care
- developing care networks in every health region
- securing political support, so that reforms extend coherently across the health system (public health, Primary Care, financing and service delivery), led by merit-based and effective management

The third session showed that improving the quality of health services requires reliable, comparable data, as well as mechanisms that link measurement to specific improvement actions.

Reliable indicators depend on uniform calculation rules, common definitions and a clear division of responsibilities within the hospital. Piloting indicators makes it possible to identify problems in data collection, train staff and refine the methodology before wider rollout. This way, measurements can be compared reliably across units.

The session also highlighted the need to move from fragmented services to integrated care networks. In these networks, patients are referred systematically from one service to the next, with continuity of information and care. Strengthening Primary Health Care is a critical part of this transition.

The presentations and discussions also showed that moving from planning to implementation is not just a technical or regulatory process. It requires:

- managerial leadership
- clear responsibilities
- organisational adaptation
- proper preparation of staff

- mechanisms for continuous evaluation

The success of reforms depends not only on new tools and regulations, but also on organisations' ability to build change into their daily operations and keep it going.

Overall, the session showed that sustainably implementing new models of care requires:

- reliable data
- common measurement methods
- ongoing training
- effective change management
- service networks, with strong Primary Health Care and user-friendly digital tools

The ultimate goal remains the continuity, quality and safety of patient care.

Round Table: "The Hospital of Tomorrow – Towards a Sustainable Health System"

Before the discussion began, Mr Giorgos Braoudakis, Founder and CEO of CMT Prooptiki, addressed the audience. The closing Round Table, moderated by journalist Mr Dimitris Takis, concluded the Forum with a discussion of the priorities and prerequisites for shaping the hospital of tomorrow.

The panel brought perspectives from health policy, clinical practice and patient representation. Participants were:

- Mr Adonis Georgiadis, Minister of Health
- Mr Ioannis Tsimaris, MP for Ioannina (PASOK–Movement for Change)
- Mr Spyros Dritsas, Health Sector Head of the Hellenic Left Alliance (EL.A.S.)
- Mr Giorgos Kalamitsis, founding member of the Greek Patients' Association
- Mr Dimitris Athanasiou, Board member of the Greek Patients' Association

The discussion opened from the patients' perspective and centred on the main pillars of the modern hospital:

- having enough staff and distributing them well, especially nursing staff
- funding and efficient use of resources
- Primary Health Care and the patient's pathway before reaching the hospital
- digital maturity and quality evaluation

Patient representatives highlighted difficulties in access and the problems faced by people with chronic conditions and rare diseases. They also stressed that patient participation in designing and evaluating services must be real, not a formality.

The political representatives presented different approaches. They cited actions already implemented:

- electronic appointments

- a single electronic surgical waiting list
- telemedicine in Health Centres
- e-prescribing
- the first evaluation of hospitals

Others argued that the following are needed:

- faster and fuller implementation
- reliable data
- higher funding, gradually converging with the EU average
- a health map based on the population's actual needs
- clear job plans and incentives for health professionals

Other issues raised included hiring and fiscal constraints, private health spending, waiting times and the role of Primary Care as the gateway to the system.

From the audience, Professor Nikos Polyzos and the Governor of Rethymno Hospital spoke about three issues:

- the difficulty of attracting staff to regional hospitals
- the need for flexibility in organisation and pay
- the importance of digital technology and artificial intelligence in daily operations

The discussion showed that transforming the hospital is not only a matter of managerial efficiency or technological modernisation. It is directly tied to public policy choices, the allocation of available resources, equal access to services and how well the health system responds to society's real needs. Despite differing views on priorities and how to achieve them, participants recognised the importance of a meaningful, evidence-based dialogue to shape a long-term health strategy centred on the patient and measurable results. In this context, effective change management was described as a critical challenge and a possible theme for the next Forum.

Overall Conclusions of the Forum

The 5th Hybrid Forum showed that transforming the modern hospital is not limited to adopting new technologies, upgrading infrastructure or improving individual administrative functions. It is part of a broader change in how health services are organised, managed and delivered, with the aim of a more coordinated, effective and people-centred system of care. The presentations and discussions produced six key themes and priorities.

1. From managing individual organisations to integrated care systems

The hospital of tomorrow cannot be treated as a standalone organisation, cut off from other health services. To work effectively, it must be systematically linked with Primary Health Care, rehabilitation services, home and palliative care, and social support services. Integrated care networks are a key prerequisite for tackling fragmented services and improving the patient pathway. They need clear

referral and back-referral procedures, coordination among professionals and continuity of information.

2. Technology and data as tools for effective management

Digital transformation is a decisive factor in modernising health services, but it is not an end in itself. Interoperable information systems, reliable and comparable data, the electronic health record and artificial intelligence can all support clinical practice and management. Digital investments deliver real value when the information collected becomes evidence-based knowledge, supports decision-making and leads to measurable improvements in the quality, safety and effectiveness of services. Prerequisites include data quality, common standards, personal data protection and staff training.

3. Quality, safety and efficiency as linked objectives

The discussions showed that quality and safety are integral to hospitals' strategy, governance and daily operations. The following create the conditions for managing available resources more effectively:

- reliable indicators
- common evaluation methods
- the use of DRGs
- systematic monitoring of outcomes

Efficiency, however, cannot be judged on financial or quantitative criteria alone. It must be linked to safety, quality, accessibility, patient experience and the actual outcomes of care.

4. Management and the workforce in managing change

Moving from planning to the sustainable implementation of new models requires effective managerial leadership, a clear strategic direction, organisational adaptation and active involvement of staff. Having enough staff, distributing them well and developing them, especially in regional hospitals, emerged as important factors in making change last. Management must go beyond the traditional handling of resources and procedures and take on a more strategic role. That role includes coordinating services, using data, building partnerships, fostering a quality culture and managing change effectively.

5. The social dimension and sustainability of reforms

The closing Round Table showed that choices about how health services are organised, financed and managed directly affect citizens' access, inequalities and the quality of care. Reforms are judged not only by operational and financial efficiency, but also by how well they meet the population's needs and reduce barriers to access. Speakers stressed that patients must be meaningfully involved in designing and evaluating services, and that long-term health policy priorities need evidence-based dialogue. Sustainability covers financial efficiency, organisational resilience and the social value of services.

6. From scientific knowledge to implementation and measurable results

A common thread throughout the Forum was that new management approaches, digital tools, evaluation mechanisms and innovative models of care must become practical interventions, with clear goals and outcomes that can be monitored. International experience and Greek initiatives showed the importance of phased implementation, continuous evaluation, organisational learning and the spread of effective practices.

The central message of the 5th Forum is that moving towards the hospital of tomorrow requires a holistic approach, in which technology, scientific evidence, managerial effectiveness, quality and the social dimension of health work together. The challenge is not only to improve how existing hospitals operate, but also to build a health system that responds more effectively to citizens' current and future needs.

The 5th Hybrid Forum was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, the Department of Nursing of NKUA, the University of West Attica (PADA), EKAB, ODIPY, the Athens Medical Society, SEIV and EOPYY. It received scientific support from the Centre for Documentation and Costing of Hospital Services (Hellenic DRG Institute).

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We warmly thank the moderators, speakers, sponsors, supporters and everyone who actively contributed to the success of the 5th Hybrid Forum. Their participation strengthens the Forum as a lasting platform for dialogue and collaboration on modern management and the transformation of health services.

With the conclusion of the 5th Forum, the Hellenic Society for Health Services Management and CMT Prooptiki reaffirm their commitment to shaping modern, practical approaches to health services management through scientific evidence, interdisciplinary dialogue and the exchange of experience. Their central aim remains the shift from improving individual organisations to building integrated, effective and people-centred systems of care that meet society's needs and the challenges of the future.

Find videos, photos and the presentations at **www.healthcare-management.gr**