

DRAFT – WORKDOCUMENT**Ministerium für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen****Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, Nederland**

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Cross-border friendship in times of crisis

- North Rhine-Westphalia and the Netherlands have traditionally been closely intertwined in social, cultural and economic areas. We share a common boundary of 395 km. There is close collaboration in all possible areas and citizens, organizations and businesses alike find each other.
- Cross-border cooperation is of such importance to both the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia that a special passage has been included in both the Dutch and the North Rhine-Westphalia coalition agreement. To further strengthen cooperation a governance structure was established and confirmed during the 1st government dialogue between the Netherlands and North Rhine-Westphalia, which contributed to the establishment of a special Corona-TaskForce North Rhine Westphalia – Lower Saxony – Netherlands – Belgium during the current corona crisis.
- Also in the treatment of patients in hospitals national borders do not hinder. On the basis of European regulations, cooperation is a common practice. Hospitals work closely together and benefit from their experiences. In the corona-crisis both countries are faced with serious challenges; this health threat also challenges our policy that wants to remove border-obstacles and create even stronger links as the Prime Ministers agreed upon.
- As assured in a phone-call on March 28th by Minister Laumann and Minister Van Rijn we are willing to face the upcoming challenges together. We want to strengthen existing cooperation between hospitals. And we agree, to assist each other within the available capacity in the situation that a shortage of capacities for intensive care may occur in the course of the corona-crisis. *[definition of intensive care]*
- Both partners agree that accruing costs of the treatment and the transportation will be covered by the country of the origin of the patient if the regular financial ways do not work sufficiently *[to be worked out further]*.
- As agreed upon the ministers will discuss how the collaboration is proceeding, preferably by the end of this week.

Optional:

- In the Netherlands the cooperation of ICU-patients in hospitals is coordinated via the Landelijk Coördinatie Centrum Patiënten Spreiding (LCPS).
- In North Rhine-Westphalia cooperation of ICU patients in hospitals ... *[to be filled in]*

- Coordination of the distribution of patients that need intensive hospital care helps to use the existing capacities in the most efficient way. The implementation of this agreement shall be organized if possible on a regional level (e.g. ROAZ from the Dutch side) taking into account the cross-border collaboration between hospitals where it exists. In the case that obstacles occur in the described structure, the Ministerium für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales of North Rhine-Westphalia and the Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport will be involved.