

Covid-19 in Belgium: saturated hospitals and paramedics

Saturday 24 October, 2020

BRUSSELS — The American company NAAB Ambulance Service LLC, also established in Belgium, informs that:

From the start, SARS-CoV-2 has been severely underestimated in Belgium. A monumental mistake that we paid dearly in the spring, and which we will again pay extremely dearly, very soon, with more intensive care hospitalizations and deaths.

The government's total incompetence through its stubborn refusal of early intervention, yet the most effective, led us directly to this second wave.

70% of our ambulance transport for Covid-19 cases:

Back to square one. Between October 1 and October 21, 2020, we went from 10% to **70% of transport, only, as part of Covid-19 support**. Those who do not work in a medical transport ambulance cannot imagine for a moment what that means.

Soon we will reach the 90% threshold, which decreases the capacity of transport for chronically ill people, not affected by Covid-19 but having to go regularly to the hospital for their dialysis, chemotherapy, or radiotherapy sessions. Decontamination protocols leading to delays, refusal of transport, even for unscrupulous carriers, neglecting decontamination, endangering the patients transported.

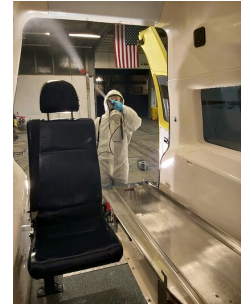
In a saturated ambulance service, the staff still exhausted their strength by traveling hundreds of kilometers daily, particularly in the context of inter-hospital transfers, **to relieve the hospitals themselves saturated**.

A regulation of the medico-health vector, as is done everywhere in Europe, would at least have had the merit of better coordinating transport by attributing proven cases to certain ambulances, while ensuring the travel of people not affected by Covid - 19, via non-Covid ambulances carrying out only these transports. Unfortunately, in Brussels, the capital of Europe, there is no legislation, no one knows what emergency or non-urgent medical transport is.

Now it is imperative to stop the nonsense and get a little serious in dealing with this pandemic, because the second wave fiasco, after the first wave, is going to cause huge damage to society.

Without much stronger measures than those currently taken so far, we are going straight into the wall, said *Arnaud Franchini, CEO of NAAB Ambulance Service LLC*.

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