

Priority 5. Inclusive society.

Specific Objective 4.5 - **Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family-and-community-based care.**

NB: This factsheet presents a **summary** of Specific Objective (SO) 4.5 of the Interreg North-West Europe Programme (NWE IP). The comprehensive description of SO 4.5, which contains detailed explanations and further examples **should be consulted for a full understanding of the SO in Chapter 2.1 of the NWE IP.**

Territorial challenges and opportunities

There are territorial imbalances in the North-West Europe (NWE) region with regards to healthcare services as inhabitants of peripheral areas have more difficulties accessing those. Population growth in urban areas and an ageing population risk affecting the NWE healthcare system's capacity to meet future care demand effectively. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the lack of resilience of healthcare systems in NWE, with regions and countries being strongly interdependent, therefore calling for better transnational cooperation. The Programme seeks to support the emergence of available, accessible, inclusive, innovative, and resilient healthcare systems in the NWE region for all citizens.

Objectives

Within this Specific Objective, the Programme aims to support projects that:

- Improve accessibility to health and (long-term) care services in rural areas, particularly in the peripheral areas of NWE.
- Develop innovative care services, smart approaches and digital solutions in health and care.
- Strengthen territorial networks of health, care, and well-being to develop solutions tailor-made to territories' needs.

Target groups

- **Local, regional, or national authorities, EGTC's, governmental organisations, public equivalent organisations** (including agencies or para-public associations) with responsibilities relating to health and care. They can steer processes for more inclusive health and care services, and drive change and innovation in relevant policy fields.

North-West Europe

- **Universities, public research centres, private research units, schools and higher education, training centres** are innovation drivers, providing scientific insight and evidence to regional challenges and further encourage the provision of innovative services in the NWE region.
- **SMEs and business support organisations** are a driving force of the economy in the NWE Programme area. They can increase the competitiveness of the NWE area in the health and care sectors, as well as drive behavioural change at business and industry level.
- **Sectoral associations, NGOs, lobby organisations, citizens groups** can act as multipliers to their networks within the field of health and care. They can promote educational initiatives to make citizens more engaged in supporting the transition to better health and care services and tools.

Activities

Projects should implement a combination of activities, such as:

- **Elaboration and implementation of joint strategies and action plans**, for example place-based strategies or action plans to develop transnational solutions or approaches to better prevent and cope with health and care issues affecting the NWE population.
- **Pilot actions for testing tools and/or solutions**, for example demonstration and joint implementation of scalable and replicable solutions, services, and technologies, to improve the availability, accessibility, inclusiveness and effectiveness of health and care services.
- **Capacity building and awareness raising activities**, for example training schemes to support health workers and carers; or to adopt innovative health and care practices in specific NWE territories.

Results

The **combination of these activities** may lead to results such as:

- Health, care, prevention, and well-being are better embedded into territorial strategies and local initiatives.
- More and better innovative strategies, practices, tools, and solutions are benefiting local communities.
- Better assistance is provided to vulnerable population groups to improve their health and well-being situation.
- Stronger stakeholder cooperation networks enable the establishment of functional linkages and/or the transfer of innovative approaches in the field of health care between territories dealing with similar issues.

Outputs and results of projects must contribute to the NWE Programme indicator framework (see the NWE IP).