

# HEALTHY LIVING 2025

WORKING  
TOGETHER  
ON  
HEALTHY  
LIVING

## FURTHER SHAPING OF HEALTHY LIVING 2025 VISION AND STRATEGY

October 2023





---

# HEALTHY LIVING 2025



## FURTHER SHAPING OF HEALTHY LIVING 2025 VISION AND STRATEGY

October 2023



---

# CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Current developments</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2. Our vision and course</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3. Our ambitions and strategic programmes</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Prevention and vitality	14
3.2 Connecting research, education and healthcare	16
3.3. Our healthcare of the future	18
3.4 Partner in networks	20
3.5 Organisational development, foundation for our strategic ambitions	22
<b>4 In conclusion</b>	<b>27</b>

This document refers to various other Maastricht UMC+ policy documents. Should you require further clarification on this, please contact Maastricht UMC+ Executive Staff at [rvb@mumc.nl](mailto:rvb@mumc.nl)







---

# PREFACE

At the end of 2019, Maastricht UMC+ issued its Healthy Living 2025 strategy. By mid-2023, this strategic course had been shaped in greater detail. Simultaneously, the Dutch healthcare landscape is more than ever in a state of flux. The challenges are great and they have rapidly become more prominent due to COVID-19 and the Integral Care Agreement. The demand for care is rising unabated, and this is happening just as we are coming up against the limits of our capacity. This is true not only for specialist medical care, but equally for GP care; the nursing, homecare and convalescent care sector; mental healthcare; acute care and the social domain. This requires innovation, inventiveness, smart organisation and, above all, cooperation between all these different domains to deliver the right care in the right place. We believe in a multidisciplinary approach that transcends existing care and research domains. That approach will take shape in the planned collaboration with Maastricht University, which will be further developed in line with the themes of 'healthy society' and 'technology: responsible disruption'.

As one of the seven University Medical Centres (UMCs) in the Netherlands and the UMC of Southeast Netherlands, we want to put current developments into perspective and be at the forefront of the necessary care transformation. In this light, too, the path taken appears to be the right one. We are therefore sticking to our vision and strategy. However, given recent developments, we are going to put further focus on our strategy, accelerate it and make it more specific.

A strategic review of Healthy Living 2025 was conducted in 2022. This review provided an interim picture of developments and activities within the framework of our strategy. At the same time, we concluded that it is time to shape Healthy Living in greater detail, further specifying the objectives.

Hence this document, which deals successively with the current social environment in which Maastricht UMC+ is operating, the greater specification of Healthy Living 2025 and further deepening of the strategic programmes within our Healthy Living strategy.

Together, we are working on healthy living and improving by increasing knowledge.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD OF MAASTRICHT UMC+**

**Dr Helen Mertens**

**Prof. Annemie Schols**

**Prof. Geraline Leusink**

**Prof. Stef Kremers**

**Drs. Gabriël Zwart, MAC**

---

# 1. CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

The societal and healthcare transformations outlined in Healthy Living 2025, including an increasingly aging population, rising healthcare demand, advancements in technology, digitalization, and labor market constraints, remain relevant in today's context. The 2021 report titled "Choosing Sustainable Healthcare," published by the Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy, had already projected that if we do not change the way that we deliver care, one in three Dutch individuals would need to work in healthcare by 2060. This prospect is not only unrealistic, but also undesirable given the major societal challenges and transitions in other policy domains. Additionally, insights from the COVID-19 pandemic have also led us to focus more explicitly on the integrated management of our healthcare capacity, flexibility of staff development, staff retention and process harmonisation.

In addition, notable trends are emerging, such as an increasing role for primary care in delivering the right care in the right place. Health and care cannot be considered separately from their relationship with society. The commitment to health and prevention is also gaining ground. Regional organisation of integrated care in networks is becoming increasingly common. Medical technology applications increasingly enable the organisation of care and health from the perspective of the patient. In the light of all these developments, we continually reflect on our strategic course and adjust where necessary.

## NATIONAL POLICY AGREEMENTS

The societal context has now been enriched by national policy initiatives that build on the above-mentioned trends to address current challenges. For instance, in autumn 2022, the Integral Care Agreement (Integraal Zorgakkoord, IZA), signed by numerous parties, was published.<sup>2</sup> The IZA targets all sections of the Health Insurance Act and makes delivery of 'appropriate care' the guiding principle. Important themes for the healthcare sector arising from the Integral Care Agreement (IZA), and in particular for the UMCs, concern commitment to the right care in the right place; creation of regional visions and plans; concentration of care (particularly highly complex care); strengthening the organisation of acute care; commitment to prevention and lifestyle medicine; value-driven care; digitalisation; improved data exchange; and strengthening the labour market. In particular, the increasing concentration on highly complex care means that in developing our strategy, we will focus even more on linking our core tasks and integrating our UMC in order to strengthen our academic position.

In addition to the IZA, the Healthy and Active Living Agreement (Gezond en Actief Leven Akkoord, GALA) followed in early 2023.<sup>3</sup> This agreement between municipalities, health insurers and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport includes agreements on achieving a healthy generation by 2040: resilient, healthy people who grow up, live, work and reside in a healthy living environment with a strong social foundation.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (2021) Kiezen voor houdbare zorg. Mensen, middelen en maatschappelijk draagvlak (Choosing sustainable healthcare. People, resources and societal support), wrr Report 104, The Hague: wrr*

<sup>2</sup> *Integral Care Agreement, Samen werken aan gezonde zorg (Working together on healthy care), version 1.0, 8 September 2022*



---

There are also relevant, national policy developments in the field of medical research. For example, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science agreed to a Sector Assessment, 'Accelerating on Health', prepared by the deans of the UMCs. This sector assessment was then developed into the Medical and Health Sciences Sector Plan, which focuses on the themes of 'prevention', 'data-driven innovation' and 'from basic research to application'.<sup>4</sup> The ultimate goal is to reinforce the foundation of research and education, and contribute more to addressing broad societal challenges.

### **SOCIETAL CHALLENGES**

The UMCs in the Netherlands play a crucial role in the required healthcare transformation. The basis for this was laid in July 2019 in a letter from the former Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport to the UMCs, in which they were assigned eight societal challenges.<sup>5</sup> Particularly in their own region (catchment area), the UMCs are expected to take the initiative and shoulder responsibility for building networks, among other things. National developments in healthcare, science and education, combined with the duty and ambition of Maastricht UMC+ to fulfil its social role in the region, have led to closer contacts at administrative level in the region and stronger connections. The results of a reputation survey that Maastricht UMC+ commissioned among its key stakeholders also contributed to this. This survey also prompted partners to invite Maastricht UMC+ to take a stronger lead in the region. This was an invitation that we wholeheartedly accept.

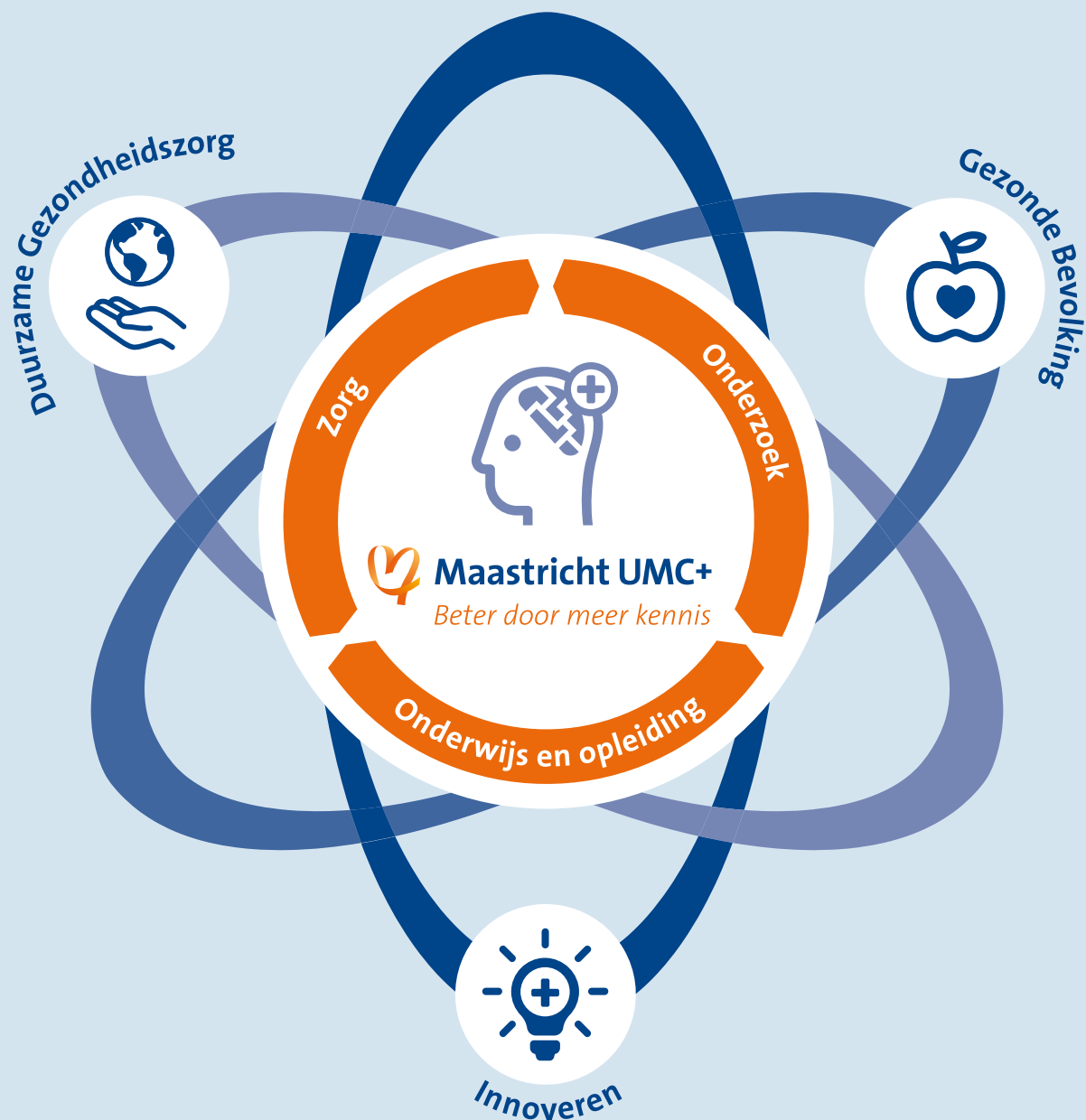
With a leadership and connecting function, Maastricht UMC+ aims to initiate and foster networks and collaborations within the region, including healthcare providers and partners in scientific research and education, and stakeholders in the social sphere.

---

<sup>3</sup> *Healthy and Active Living Agreement, January 2023*

<sup>4</sup> *Medical and Health Sciences Sector Plan, Versnellen op gezondheid (Accelerating on health), NFU, May 2022*

<sup>5</sup> *Letter from Minister for Medical Care, Interdepartementaal Beleidsonderzoek: Universitair Medische Centra (UMC's) (Interdepartmental Policy Review: University Medical Centres (UMCs)), Parliamentary Document-33278-8, The Hague 12 July 2019*





## 2. OUR VISION AND COURSE

Maastricht UMC+ is continuously innovating in healthcare, research, education and training. We collaborate and forge alliances to achieve our shared aims: innovation for sustainable healthcare and a healthy population.

In the light of above-mentioned developments and trends, we can conclude that our vision remains relevant for the current time and appropriately sums up our view of the future. However, we will also have to continue to think critically about our course on the long term. Healthy Living 2025 gives us the right starting point and frameworks for developing that course appropriately at the current time.

The following section elaborates on the vision. Our vision is the broad view of our role in society, how we view the world in the light of developments around us. Our ambitions indicate what we aim to achieve, which is described in line with the strategic programmes. Each programme contributes to our shared ambitions and includes a change strategy, targeted facilitation and specific objectives.

### OUR VISION

As a university medical centre, we focus on treating patients with highly complex healthcare needs requiring specialist care, as well as being responsible for the provision of basic care for patients in our region. We take a broad view of health and look beyond illness. We have a strong position in prevention and health promotion. Lifestyle and the physical and social environment play an important role in these areas. We also consider quality of life, a sense of purpose and ethics. We carry out our core tasks of healthcare, research, education and training, and valorisation based on this integrated outlook. The needs and priorities of the population are paramount in this regard.

We keep healthcare accessible and affordable by organising it in such a way that the right care is available in the right place, and provided by the right professional. The changing role and position of the patient is our primary concern. Our patients receive optimised and personalised care. Digitalisation and technology constantly offer new possibilities. Sustainability is a primary consideration, with a focus on the vitality of people and the environment.

We do all of this together with our partners. We build networks within and outside the region, with Maastricht UMC+ as an academic knowledge and intervention centre in collaboration with Maastricht University. Making connections is our strength and we take a proactive and driving role in this. We initiate and encourage innovation, which leads to new applications to further improve people's health. After all, a healthy population is an important basis for economic development and progress.

Students choose Maastricht because of our innovative and leading-edge education. Researchers are attracted by our state-of-the-art infrastructure. For our employees, we are an attractive employer with a focus on well-being, personal development and employability. Our healthcare professionals, researchers, trainers, teachers and students coordinate with each other to link together our core tasks, contributing to a healthier region.

---

## 3. OUR AMBITIONS AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

Our vision is supported in *Healthy Living 2025* by four strategic programmes:

- Connecting research, education and healthcare;
- Our Healthcare of the Future;
- Partner in networks;
- Organisational development.

The goals we set ourselves in these programmes need to be further specified and aligned with the present circumstances. To this end, we are focussing our ambitions, underpinned by further development of the strategic programmes needed to achieve these aims. At the same time, various elements from the programmes have now become embedded in the organisation and are part of day-to-day operations. With the stated ambitions and the deepening of the strategic programmes, we intend to focus more strongly on our positioning as a university medical centre and firmly embed the distinctive character of Maastricht UMC+.

The foundation for our ambitions lies in strengthening our core tasks: healthcare, research, education and training, and valorisation. We use the strength of our existing knowledge and expertise, and the high-quality infrastructure already available for the entire innovation chain: from fundamental, translational and clinical research to implementation. From research and educational institutes and Academic Collaborative Centres to the clinic. Based on societal interests, we are strengthening our role as an academic driver and remain in constant contact with all interested stakeholders.

### OUR PROPOSITIONS

We choose to define our course more precisely. Maastricht UMC+ has two explicit propositions in this regard:

1. Maastricht UMC+ will become the national knowledge and expertise centre in the field of prevention and vitality, and will deploy this knowledge in its own region.
2. Maastricht UMC+ is strengthening its academic position in a number of healthcare and related research topics in which we are – or will become – the national and international leader.



---

## DEEPENING OUR STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES

Both propositions are supported by a further deepening of the Healthy Living strategic programmes, in which we formulate clear objectives and in which we explicitly want to invest. 'Prevention and vitality' is therefore added as a supplementary strategic programme.

- **Prevention and vitality**

We invest in generating knowledge on prevention and, on this basis, develop interventions to promote and restore health. We initiate, support and accelerate implementation, upscaling and sustainable integration of interventions in order to work towards improving health and vitality in our region and beyond. At the same time, we share our knowledge and enable others to contribute to solving health issues. We do so for citizens, patients, students and our employees.

- **Connecting research, education and healthcare**

We invest in the growth and strengthening of a limited number of tertiary referral positions that are closely linked to scientific research. In this regard, we are making a conscious and informed choice based on a portfolio analysis.

- **Our Healthcare of the Future**

We organise our patients' care in the best way possible, based on the restructuring of care pathways, the principle of the right care in the right place and portfolio analysis. We are investing in data-driven digitalisation of our care processes to facilitate the direction towards appropriate healthcare. To this end, we are strengthening our data foundation and optimising the storage and exchange of medical and other data for healthcare and research purposes.

- **Partner in networks**

We invest in strengthening knowledge and health networks, taking on an initiating and driving role. In doing so, we underline the importance of our position in the healthcare landscape, but also shoulder the responsibility we have as a UMC for good, accessible healthcare throughout the region, from basic care to tertiary referral care. We also collaborate with leading national and international partners in the field of tertiary care and research.

- **Organisational development**

Organisational development as envisaged in Healthy Living 2025 resulted in the implementation of a revised organisational structure in 2020 and financial restructuring in 2023. Organisational development is a continuous process. We continue to critically reflect whether the structure serves the achievement of our ambitions and adjust it where necessary.

---

### 3.1 PREVENTION AND VITALITY

#### Our ambition

Maastricht UMC+ has the ambition to be the preeminent national knowledge and expertise centre for prevention and vitality and to accelerate innovations in these fields, first of all in our own region. From basic research through to sustainable implementation of proven interventions in all layers of the prevention pyramid. Partners should be able to expect coordination and direction from Maastricht UMC+ aimed at reducing socio-economic health disparities and improving the vitality of the population.

#### Why is this important to us?

“Providing the best possible healthcare and improving health in the region by integrating patient care, research and education.” Our mission statement makes it explicit that Maastricht UMC+’s role is not limited to restoring health. Prevention, lifestyle promotion and vitality are woven into all aspects of the Healthy Living strategy. Similarly, the Medical and Health Sciences Sector Plan focuses strongly on the theme of prevention.

We specifically choose this in view of the relatively large health inequalities in our own catchment area, such as higher rates of excess weight and obesity, more chronic diseases and the number of people not meeting exercise standards. To address health inequalities and keep healthcare accessible, a focus on healthy living is essential.

#### What are our guiding principles?

Health promotion is an interplay between numerous actors: from individual citizens, healthcare institutions and health insurers to various levels of government, as well as knowledge institutions and industry. However, many prerequisites also play a role in an effective prevention strategy: from structural funding, data sharing and digitalisation to legislation. This complex interplay of factors and actors carries the risk of no one feeling ownership and providing leadership. However, university medical centres may play a decisive and guiding role here. As both a knowledge and healthcare institution, Maastricht UMC+ occupies an important place in the health network for driving effective health promotion with a programme-based and planned approach. Our role therefore goes beyond developing interventions and researching their effectiveness. In the *Prevention Approach Strategy 2025*, we set out our vision for prevention and outline the frameworks and preconditions for how we want to achieve our ambition in close cooperation with the region.

Prevention is not just about growing old healthily and preventing people from needing healthcare, it also concerns recovering as quickly as possible if healthcare does prove necessary. Themes such as regeneration and rehabilitation are inextricably linked to it. Regenerative medicine aims, among other things, to develop new treatments that repair, replace or restore cells, tissues and organ functions after damage from disease or injury. The application of regenerative medicine, for example, can lead to shorter hospital stays and accelerated rehabilitation. Through our research institutes and Academic Collaborative Centres, we possess explicit knowledge and expertise in this area.

The practical implementation of health-promoting activities will be entrusted to the vitality hub. This hub at Maastricht UMC+ has an overview of accessible lifestyle and other interventions inside and outside the walls of Maastricht UMC+. The healthcare provider refers



---

a person to the vitality hub and the individual or patient is directed in one or two sessions to the right party in the region that can provide appropriate preventive support. The hub is also concerned with promoting the vitality of the hospital's own staff and students. In the next phase, the vitality hub will act as a coordinator for the entire region.

**What are our strategic objectives?**

Maastricht UMC+ sees the following objectives for itself within the 'Prevention and Vitality' strategic programme:

1. Identifying societal health issues, in particular through the *Knowledge and Innovation Agenda for Southeast Netherlands* and actively addressing these issues in consultation with health partners in the region.
2. Developing lifestyle and other interventions to promote health and vitality in all layers of the prevention pyramid and scientifically assessing the effect of the interventions developed, with a view to reducing socio-economic health disparities in the region and beyond.
3. Structurally embedding lifestyle interventions in its own healthcare offer in line with the principles of the Lifestyle in Healthcare Coalition.
4. Demonstrating leadership with regard to collaboration and networking in our own region and using knowledge and expertise to identify proven effective lifestyle and other interventions in all layers of the prevention pyramid and to coordinate and promote their sustainable implementation and upscaling.
5. Setting up UMC-wide curricula with structural attention to lifestyle medicine, prevention and vitality, as well as interprofessional collaboration, in the training of the healthcare professionals of the future.
6. Visualising the overall well-being and health in a broad sense (physical, mental and socio-emotional) of the individual patient (especially in the case of chronic diseases), including the patient's risk and lifestyle factors. This in order to determine where to start in improving the patient's health.

---

## 3.2 CONNECTING RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE

### Our ambition

Maastricht UMC+ strives to strengthen and expand its academic position in a number of healthcare and relevant research themes in which we are a national and international leader. To this end, we make informed and well-founded choices for a portfolio of tertiary referral care that is closely linked to scientific research.

### Why is this important to us?

National policy developments aim to create a future-proof healthcare landscape through the concentration and distribution of healthcare, particularly highly complex care. The guiding principle is that through greater specialisation and differentiation, the quality and accessibility of care will improve by increasing volumes and making the best possible use of scarce staff and expensive infrastructure. A strong university-level care profile is important for strengthening the offer of complex, university-level care and the national and regional positioning of Maastricht UMC+.

A close connection and interaction between healthcare and scientific research are leading and crucial to this ambition. The Medical and Health Sciences Sector Plan clarifies what is needed to accelerate the engine of medical innovation. The themes identified in the plan (prevention, data-driven innovation and from fundamental research to application) are in line with Healthy Living 2025 and the cornerstones chosen for our strategy, and there is a clear link to developments in the concentration of healthcare. The sector plan is instrumental in positioning Maastricht UMC+ in relation to other UMCs and enabling it to assume its academic leadership role in the region.

### What are our guiding principles?

In our choices, we take account of the specific characteristics and health problems - with a focus on the regional population, the area where we can make the most difference and make the greatest contribution to restoring patients' health. We focus on those areas in which we have built up extensive knowledge, skills and expertise, and where we cover (whether or not in collaboration with partners) the entire innovation cycle, from basic research through translational and clinical research to practical application in healthcare.

Making choices regarding the care we provide is no easy task. We proceed carefully, based on qualitative and quantitative insights. This includes an analysis of the quality of the current healthcare we provide, the provision offered by other hospitals and MUMCs, university key figures, the connection with research and education, and future expectations. On this basis, we determine which type of healthcare we see as a priority and in which we already distinguish ourselves or would like to distinguish ourselves, which type of care is not a priority but which we would like to keep – in-house or under our control – and which type of care we would like to transfer to other hospitals or UMCs. We naturally do this with concern for patients as well as employees and our collaboration partners.

---

### *Integrating healthcare and research*

In support of this ambition, Maastricht UMC+ emphasises the added value created by properly linking the core tasks of healthcare, research, education and training, and valorisation. In committing ourselves to increasingly strengthening the links between these tasks, we are taking a broad, integrated approach. Further integration of research with clinical work is promoted by strengthening the thematic link between patient care centres and research institutes, both one-dimensional and multidimensional. Of course, the planned collaboration with Maastricht University, which aims to create an integrated UMC, is also going to help in connecting education, research and healthcare. Accelerating the application of technological innovations in healthcare and optimising the supporting research infrastructure are important prerequisites for this collaboration.

### **What are our strategic objectives?**

Maastricht UMC+ sees itself pursuing the following more sharply defined objectives within the strategic programme 'Connecting research, education and healthcare':

1. Based on a portfolio analysis, we make well-founded choices in the care we provide and the related scientific research.
2. In the chosen portfolio areas, we aim for growth in volume and in the percentage share of complex care. In doing so, we make targeted agreements with other healthcare providers in the region.
3. In line with an increase in university-level healthcare, we are at the same time selectively reducing less complex secondary care. In doing so, we will make targeted agreements with other healthcare providers in the region and invest in a shift to intermediate care.
4. In the chosen portfolio areas, we aim for a steady expansion of the research budget acquired externally.
5. We give additional impetus to the chosen portfolio areas by investing in improving tertiary referral care and further strengthening scientific research where possible.
6. Based on changes in healthcare, we optimise the educational provision by revising ongoing programmes, developing new study programmes (e.g., BSc in Regenerative Medicine and Technology, MSc in Health and Digital Transformation) and Lifelong Learning programmes.
7. We implement applications quickly and effectively within the innovation chain, which leads to growth in product development and commercial activity. As a participant in Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus, Maastricht UMC+ is emphatically committed to valorisation.



---

### 3.3 OUR HEALTHCARE OF THE FUTURE

#### Our ambition

Maastricht UMC+ aims to accelerate the movement towards appropriate healthcare. We invest in data-driven work, digitalisation of our healthcare processes and support from Artificial Intelligence in the interests of access to care.

#### Why is this important to us?

To achieve our ambitions in the field of prevention and tertiary referral care, it is essential to provide the best possible care for our patients within the entire range of healthcare services available. Among other things, aspirations related to the concentration of highly complex care, transferred hospital care and the expansion of secondary care provision at other locations, are highlighted. Given the current and future labour market shortages, it is not just wishful thinking but a necessity to redesign healthcare. However, we see opportunities in increasing digitalisation and the smart use of data to improve healthcare outcomes while reducing workloads. The Medical and Health Sciences Sector Plan also highlights the importance of data and data-driven innovation. However, this requires a change in thinking and acting, not only from patients, but also from healthcare professionals.

All our efforts are ultimately aimed at improving the quality of patient care and patient experience, while keeping healthcare costs manageable. In doing so, besides improving patients' quality of life, we contribute to general economic and societal interests. This is how we will keep healthcare sustainable, affordable and accessible.

#### What are our guiding principles?

To further improve and optimise healthcare, the Our Healthcare of the Future programme was set up and an organisational change was implemented. The aim is to structure the organisation in such a way that optimum quality of healthcare is provided through care pathways and the patient is guided smoothly and effectively through the various steps of the diagnostic and treatment process. By participating in this process, the patient can have control. We believe in '*vitality in, vitality during and vitality out*'.

The mostly multidisciplinary teams of healthcare professionals related to specific diagnostic groups are supported to restructure care pathways. Work is becoming increasingly digital and data-driven. There is both generic support available

(*Guide to Redesigning Care Pathways*, generic Data and Information Fundamentals, Expert Committee on Questionnaires, *Person-centred Healthcare*, Digital Healthcare), and specific support aimed at specific needs of decentralised care pathways.

The Maastricht UMC+ *Data Position Paper* and the Data Governance document indicate the importance of a data-driven organisation for achieving our strategic ambitions in healthcare, research, education and operational management. This requires a well-functioning data foundation (registration, storage and exchange) including underlying data architecture and well-established data governance. These are necessary to achieve better care outcomes, make healthcare data available and more accessible for research, for external exchange with other parties and for external accountability.

---

The **Digital Care Strategy 2025** document sets out the course for further embedding digitalisation in the healthcare we provide. The guiding principle of Maastricht's digital course is 'hybrid care': care in which digital resources have a prominent place in giving patients confidence and control in their own care process. In this way, the right care is delivered in the right place, so that neither patients nor healthcare professionals lose control.

**What are our strategic objectives?**

Maastricht UMC+ sees itself pursuing the following more clearly defined objectives within the strategic programme 'Our Healthcare of the Future':

1. Our care pathways are provided with a data and information foundation, including a structured EPR, a care pathway team dashboard and an individual patient dashboard. This will enable the various care outcomes (including patient-reported outcomes) to be objectified and further improved for both patient groups and individual patients.
2. The data foundation (registration, storage and sharing), data governance and data privacy and security will be optimised for healthcare and research purposes.
3. Maastricht UMC+ is a frontrunner in the participatory care model and we make this possible through the use of digital healthcare.
4. Healthcare professionals and patients decide together on the most appropriate care according to the principles of Shared Decision-Making throughout the patient process and in accordance with the individual patient's language and health skills.
5. All high-risk patients have pre-clinical, clinical and post-clinical optimisation plans for their overall health (at least in terms of diet and exercise), and patients and healthcare professionals are supported in this by data and digitalisation.
6. We enrich our own data by better linking it with data from external partners to better understand the current state of society's health. Targeted interventions can be developed on this basis.
7. We invest in research and the application of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning to improve our patient care and make even better use of our data.

---

### 3.4 PARTNER IN NETWORKS

#### **Our ambition**

Maastricht UMC+ uses collaboration explicitly and effectively to achieve its strategic objectives. Through collaboration, we aim to support distinctive tertiary referral care and excellent research, and strengthen and further expand our knowledge and health networks. Collaboration crosses domains, which is necessary for achieving Maastricht UMC+'s ambitions. In line with the MUMC's societal tasks, we take on the role of initiator and driver to bring partners together, with the ambition of accelerating the healthcare transformation.

#### **Why is this important to us?**

Alliances help define and shape our profile and task areas. Further collaboration and networking are necessary for us to achieve our ambitions in prevention, tertiary referral care, research and education. We invest in our own region to identify local health problems and address them in a targeted way, and also in the wider catchment area within the Academic Alliance with Radboud University Medical Centre (Radboud UMC), as well as on a national scale in issues relating to further concentration of care.

#### **What are our guiding principles?**

We already boast a highly connected health network and there are numerous examples of strategic collaboration, from patient organisations and scientific networks to mental health and the social domain. Our evolving overarching alliance strategy outlines the frameworks for a future-proof collaboration portfolio.

The region has strongly connected knowledge and health networks in which Maastricht UMC+ has a leading and initiating role, such as the Education and Training Region Southeast Netherlands (OORZON), the Academic Collaborative Centres, the Intensive Care Units Southeast Netherlands (ICUZON), the Oncological Network Southeast Netherlands (OncoZON), the Regional Acute Care Consultations (ROAZ), the Alliance Santé (Health Alliance) in Maastricht-Heuvelland, and Trendbreuk (Trend break) in South Limburg.

In the Academic Alliance, Radboud UMC and Maastricht UMC+ collaborate across the full range of UMC core tasks. Together, we as partners aim to ensure a wide range of university-level healthcare and the related innovation function in Southeast Netherlands.

Also important in the context of our position as an academic institute are the relationships with Ciro (Centre of Expertise for Chronic Organ Failure), Kempenhaeghe (Academic Centre for Epileptology), Maastricht Clinic (Radiotherapy) and Adelante (Rehabilitation).

We collaborate with Maastricht University and the Province of Limburg in the Brightlands Maastricht Health Campus. Innovations are firmly embedded in this campus as well as in the wider Brightlands ecosystem.

Maastricht UMC+ is involved in numerous national and international partnerships, both in healthcare and in scientific research and education.

#### **What are our strategic objectives?**

Maastricht UMC+ sees itself pursuing the following more clearly defined objectives within the strategic line 'Partner in networks':



- 
1. Maastricht UMC+ is taking the lead in Limburg and Southeast Brabant, together with hospital partners, to arrive at a shared network perspective on the future content and positioning of hospital care, from primary to tertiary referral care, as well as the training of healthcare professionals, in Southeast Netherlands.
  2. Following the *vision on the Academic Alliance* with Radboud UMC, the collaboration will be further developed. The alliance is aimed at jointly strengthening the core academic tasks of healthcare, education, research and valorisation, and embedding them in Southeast Netherlands.
  3. Following the declaration of intent signed in 2022, Maastricht UMC+ is entering into a far-reaching collaboration agreement with the Sint Jans Gasthuis hospital in Weert, with the aim of sustainably embedding the availability, accessibility and quality of basic care in the SJG Weert catchment area, and further strengthening the academic profile of Maastricht UMC+.
  4. Maastricht UMC+ is initiating coordination in acute care in the context of Regional Acute Care Consultations (Regionaal Overleg Acute Zorgketen, ROAZ), with the aim of ensuring a comprehensive network of emergency facilities together with regional partners involved, with multitrauma being concentrated at Maastricht UMC+.
  5. In consultation with Maastricht University, Maastricht UMC+ is actively considering enhancing partnership opportunities. This may involve fostering interfaculty collaboration and, to some extent, extending connections with various national and international technical and non-technical universities as well as industry stakeholders. (See also below: Intensifying cooperation with Maastricht University).
  6. With a view to improving the health of the population, Maastricht UMC+ is giving additional impetus to the initiatives within the Knowledge and Innovation Agenda Southeast Netherlands (KIA-ZON).
  7. To develop and ensure the regional function of the vitality hub, Maastricht UMC+ is proactive in maintaining contact with all stakeholders in the health network.
  8. Maastricht UMC+ is strengthening its relationship with local partners in the chain (e.g., ZIO, RHZ, Envida) to ensure optimal patient flow.

---

### **3.5 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, FOUNDATION FOR OUR STRATEGIC AMBITIONS**

Organisational development as envisaged in Healthy Living 2025 has been completed through the implementation of a new structure in 2020 and financial restructuring in 2023. However, no organisation is ever 'finished'. We are aware that strategic ambitions may result in the need for adjustments to the organisational structure. In short, we remain agile.

In addition, the organisation in the broadest sense of the word also forms the basis and setting for several facilities and developments that make it possible to achieve the substantive ambitions described above, and are indispensable for that purpose.

Below, we discuss the broader context of organisational development, together with key themes that will help shape our organisation in the coming years. These are themes on which many colleagues are working with great dedication and energy.

#### **Organisational development**

The new organisation is aligned with the strategic ambitions for our patients and staff: being able to respond better to changes in healthcare and the demand for care. The structure is characterised by logically clustered patient care centres in which care pathways can be designed and further developed. Patient care centres are the foundation of our organisation, within which medical departments, expertise units and service companies work closely together. Through better coordination on the scarcity of people and resources, we also keep the costs of care manageable.

Organisational development is a continuous process. We anticipate new developments and seek to align them with the portfolio choices, with the aim of concentrating care (including highly complex care) and the collaborative partnerships in the region. In the context of the ambition to work together transparently, uniformly and effectively, we continually assess whether the structure of our organisation and our working methods contribute to this. A review of the organisation will be conducted in 2023. We are assessing the leadership structure at board level. We are also moving to reposition advisory functions such as Communications, Finance, P&O and Quality and Safety centrally at their main base, i.e., the service companies.

#### **Organising care - Focus on highly complex care and academic profile**

In line with strengthening links between medical research and education, and a greater emphasis on our academic profiling and positioning, the extent of secondary care is being reduced. As Maastricht UMC+ currently fulfils the twin functions of academic centre and regional hospital, implementing this course of action requires great organisational capacity to provide the right care in the right place. Maastricht UMC+ can only succeed in making this move in coordination with its partners in Limburg and the rest of Southeast Netherlands. Major steps have now been taken in the form of extensive collaboration with Annadal Kliniek and SJG Weert hospitals. But the broader network perspective, with Maastricht UMC+ as the knowledge institute for Southeast Netherlands, is also high on the agenda in discussions with the other hospitals in our catchment area.

#### **Collaboration with Maastricht University**

As previously mentioned and also announced publicly, MUMC+ is exploring closer interfaculty cooperation with Maastricht University. Among other things, this is in line with the policies from the Integral Care Agreement (IZA), which call for an integrated response to health and care issues that go beyond the curative and biomedical perspective. Moreover, developments

---

in medical technology and, above all, urgent societal and specifically regional challenges also make further collaboration advisable. The aim is therefore to build on existing collaboration, with as long-term goal an integrated UMC of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML) and University Hospital Maastricht (azM), which will also involve the other faculties of Maastricht University more closely. This integrated UMC would have a joint strategy and investment agenda, under centralised control, and therefore a greater societal role. The two substantive themes of ‘healthy society’ and ‘technology: responsible disruption’ are central to the planned collaboration with Maastricht University.

#### **Electronic Patient Record (EPR)**

The EPR and associated functionalities are indispensable for supporting healthcare provision: as the ‘backbone’, it forms the basis of information provision and digital process support in healthcare. The existing EPR of Maastricht UMC+ is at the end of its service life and needs to be replaced. As part of a European tendering procedure, Maastricht UMC+ has chosen the EPR from the supplier Epic.

The partnership with Epic makes Maastricht UMC+ part of a strong international user community, which in the Netherlands includes Radboud UMC, Amsterdam UMC and UMC Groningen.

#### **P&O service company**

Our employees are our driving force in delivering high-quality healthcare, research and teaching every day. Our goal is to be the most attractive employer in Southeast Netherlands, so that in the future, we will continue to have enough employees to provide patients with the best care and achieve our ambitions. The P&O service company provides the facilities and organisation that enable our employees to excel on a daily basis. In the **2023 P&O plan**, we provide focus and make choices, so as to anticipate internal customer demand and external developments, such as generation management and labour market shortages relating to crucial positions.

Projects have been prioritised for the coming years based on the strategic topics ‘MUMC+ as a magnet institution’, ‘anticipating labour market shortages’, ‘modern employment practices’ and ‘organisational development’. In doing so, we are reassessing the activities, but also repositioning the P&O service company within MUMC+. Not only the patients, but also our staff are of central importance to us. We are launching initiatives based on strategic staff planning. In addition, we put extra effort into reducing the workload, absenteeism due to illness and how to prevent it, social safety and leadership (including individual leadership). There are specific measures for nurses. Our first priority is to implement the P&O items within the plans of the Faculty of Nursing. These contribute towards recruiting, attracting and retaining staff for nursing positions in particular.

#### **Sustainability**

The climate crisis poses a major threat to public health and is causing an increase in the demand for healthcare. The healthcare sector itself contributes to climate change, among other things due to the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> it emits and the resources it often throws away after a single use. Increasing numbers of healthcare providers and healthcare professionals want to tackle this issue. In the Green Deal signed by various parties from the healthcare sector and the

Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport, parties have committed to making healthcare greener. The Green Deal on Sustainable Healthcare sets specific, ambitious targets. Maastricht UMC+ is going to work on this. A project organisation will be set up to translate the objectives of the Green Deal into concrete measures.

### **Property and renovation**

Maastricht UMC+ is about to embark on extensive renovation. However, the Strategic Property Plan developed for this purpose is much more than just a building/renovation plan. It translates the strategy and guiding principles of MUMC+ into property. Consider, for example, the role reserved for digital healthcare, but also the importance of sustainability. Focusing on the changes relating to the content of healthcare, our patients' care paths, better organisation of work processes, greater flexibility, smart logistics and the separation of patient and staff flows. Studies have been conducted into demographic developments in our catchment area; which diseases are expected to occur most frequently; which new techniques and digital technologies we can expect; developments in the labour market, etc. The wishes and expectations of the organisation were also taken into account. In general, more effective use of m<sup>2</sup> is a key issue.









---

## 4. IN CONCLUSION

Healthy Living 2025 describes the strategic course and vision of Maastricht UMC+, based on a broad approach to health and disease, aimed at health preservation and promotion as well as recovery. Maastricht UMC+ trains academics in competences based on this comprehensive vision of health and care.

Maastricht UMC+ adds to this vision with the ambition of being the knowledge and expertise centre for prevention and vitality, excelling in a specific number of healthcare and related research topics. Where the healthcare system is reaching its limits, Maastricht UMC+ aims to address the health challenges of our time and, in particular, the specific characteristics of our region.

We invite our colleagues and partners to join us in shaping this vision and contributing to a sustainable healthcare system.

In this way, we will work together on healthy living and improve by increasing knowledge.

