

Attacks on Ukrainian hospitals, ambulances increasing rapidly

The World Health Organization said on Tuesday (March 8) attacks on hospitals, ambulances and other health care facilities in Ukraine have increased rapidly in recent days and warned the country is running short of vital medical supplies.



Source: [Rixabay](#)

The UN agency has confirmed at least nine people had died in 16 attacks on healthcare facilities since the start of a Russian invasion on February 24. It did not say who was responsible.

The WHO's senior emergency officer for Europe, Catherine Smallwood, told a news briefing that the tally included incidents where ambulances had been commandeered for purposes other than emergency healthcare.

The agency was working to rapidly supply medical supplies to Ukraine, where oxygen, insulin, personal protective equipment, surgical supplies and blood products are running low, Europe regional director Hans Kluge said at the briefing.

The supply of oxygen, children's vaccines and mental-health expertise were among the WHO's top priorities for the region, he said.

Kluge also stressed the need to prioritise the health needs of women, including maternal health and emergency obstetric care, and to respond to sexual and gender-based violence.

"Past conflicts have shown us that adolescent girls, women with disabilities and elderly women are in the most vulnerable situation.

"They face an increased risk of suffering attacks by people outside the home and by armed groups as well as intimate-partner violence and sexual abuse and exploitation," said Kluge.

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