



















# Annual Report 2025

# A day at Karolinska University Hospital 2025

-  **467** patient visits to emergency departments  
**86** by ambulance and  
**2** by helicopter
-  **1,093** patients admitted to inpatient care
-  **277** surgeries and interventions
-  **1,333** pathology reports
-  **5,174** physical visits
-  **167** video consultations
-  **3,834** consultation visits
-  **1,795** nurse visits
-  **900** students in clinical training
-  **10** non-residential patients
-  **25** childbirths
-  **223** chemotherapy treatments
-  **60** ongoing phase 1 clinical trials
-  **1,667** ongoing and planned clinical studies
-  **111** dialysis treatments
-  **5,134** medical dictations

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# Together, we shape the future of healthcare

Looking back on 2025, I do so with both humility and pride. In every encounter across the hospital's many departments, I have witnessed the power that emerges when we take responsibility together. I see colleagues tirelessly working to meet patients' needs, every day, around the clock. This takes place under intense development pressure and in a reality that demands constant adaptation and new ways of working, with patient benefit, quality and innovation in focus.

This has been a year in which we not only met—but exceeded—our targets for access to care within established budget frameworks, delivering a clear financial surplus. This means that more patients received the right care at the right time, and that we managed our shared resources responsibly.

In collaboration with our labor unions, we have continued to strengthen our culture of partnership and transparency. At the same time, we have taken important steps to improve the work environment and create better conditions for sustainable professional practice and leadership for all employees.

Karolinska University Hospital is ranked as Europe's leading university hospital and one of the foremost in the world. This recognition inspires us to continuously advance across our entire mission: clinical care, research, innovation, and education.

It is at the intersection of these missions that new opportunities arise for patients from Stockholm and across Sweden, enabling us to provide highly specialized care consistent with the mandate of Sweden's university hospitals.

In close collaboration with Karolinska Institutet, other healthcare providers, and our life science partners, we contribute to the development of groundbreaking



### Mission

- We are best at the most difficult.
- We take responsibility for our common resources.



### Vision

We will cure and relieve tomorrow what no-one can cure and relieve today.



### Values

- Responsibility
- Compassion
- Holistic Approach



**Accessible care**



**World-class care, research, and education**



**An inspiring workplace to thrive in**



**Societal responsibility**

therapies and new models of collaboration for the future. The ATMP Center is one example of how research discoveries translate into advanced treatments in the form of cell, gene, and tissue therapies. Karolinska's ATMP Center is unique and a European leader in the field.

In partnership with SciLifeLab and Karolinska Institutet, we continue working to ensure that more patients benefit from advances in precision medicine, including the newly established highly specialized research center that consolidates leading expertise in targeted therapies—primarily in oncology—the Theranostics Trial Center (TTC).

The benefits of access to cutting-edge research and clinical expertise extend far beyond our patients. In a time characterized by significant geopolitical uncertainty, it is essential that we contribute to strengthening Sweden's competitiveness and innovation capacity in healthcare and life sciences.

Karolinska University Hospital has long been active in Nordic and European

alliances. In 2025, the Swedish University Hospital Alliance was launched, a national collaboration in which Sweden's seven university hospitals joined forces to strengthen highly specialized care, research, and education.

We have been ISO 14001 certified for 20 years and continue to contribute to Region Stockholm's ambitious sustainability goals, while deliberately strengthening our crisis preparedness and resilience capabilities.

In 2025, we defined our strategic direction for the coming years. This Annual Report reflects our priority areas and ambitious objectives.

I am convinced that in 2026 we will continue to develop Karolinska University Hospital, with a clear focus on contributing to the whole—for the benefit of patients and employees—with the vision that tomorrow we will be able to cure and alleviate conditions that today remain beyond our reach.

**Christophe Pedroletti**,  
CEO,  
Karolinska University Hospital



Photo: Sofia Frisk

# A university hospital in several locations

Karolinska University Hospital is Region Stockholm’s university hospital, with a specific mandate to provide specialized and highly specialized medical care. The hospital also receives patients from other parts of Sweden as well as from abroad.

The mission includes primary responsibility for medical education and research within the region, together with other partners and universities. The hospital employs approximately 16,500 people across 150 professional categories. Surgery is primarily conducted at the Solna and Huddinge location. Karolinska University Hospital also provides care through affiliated services located at other hospitals.

The hospital is organized around the patient care pathways, structured into six clinical themes and three functional units, supported by central administrative departments. Most clinical departments have dual executive leadership: one nurse executive responsible for nursing and patient care services, and one physician executive responsible for the medical unit.

**DIVE DEEPER!**

Scan the QR code for more facts about the hospital.



## Clinical theme areas and function units

- Emergency Medicine and Reparative Medicine
- Pediatrics (Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital)
- Cancer
- Heart, Vascular and Neuro
- Inflammation and Ageing
- Women’s Health and Allied Health Professionals
- Medical Diagnostics Karolinska
- Perioperative Medicine and Intensive Care
- Perioperative Medicine and Intensive Care–Pediatrics

Karolinska University Hospital operates at several locations throughout the Stockholm region:

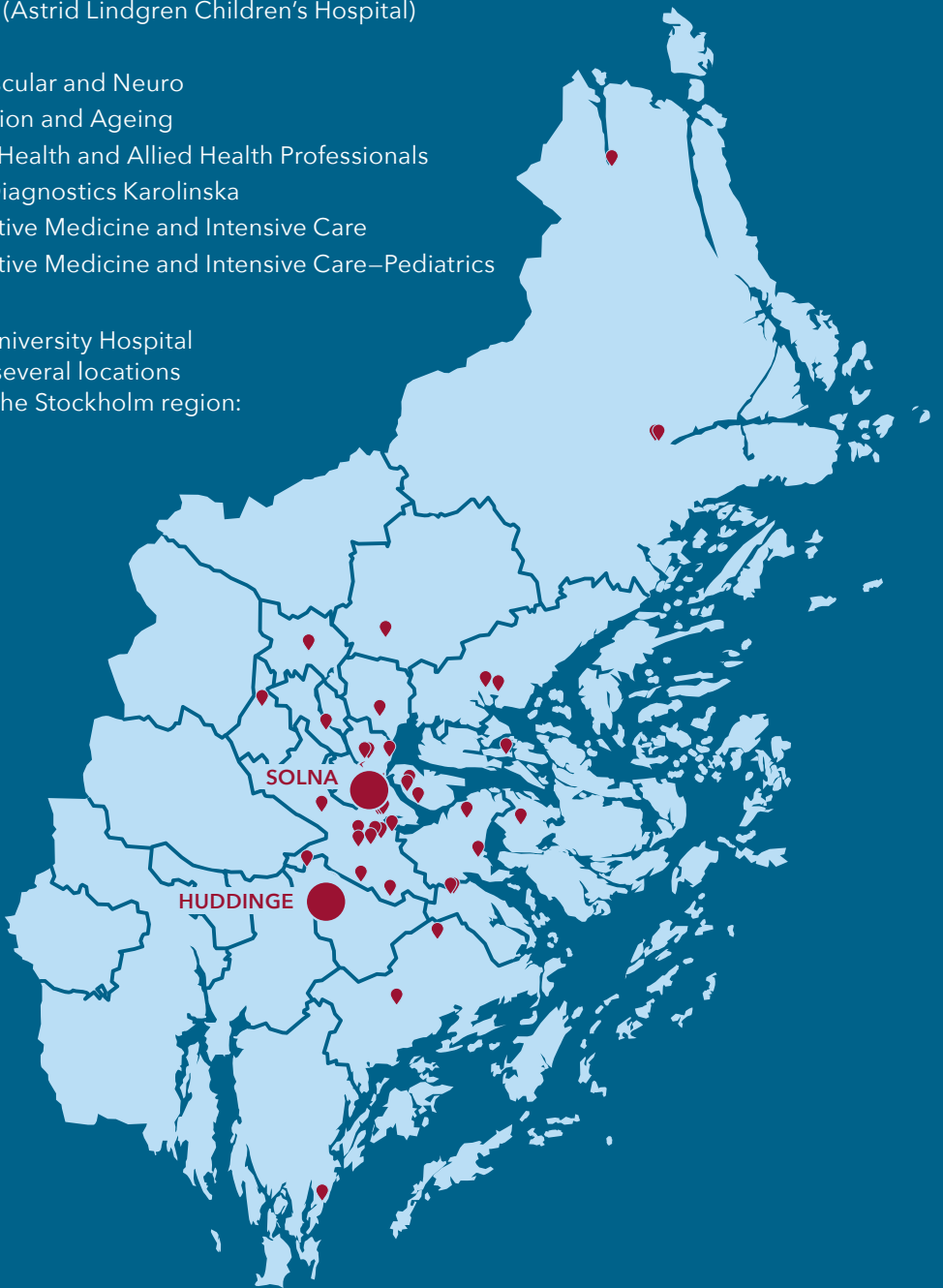




Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

# World-class care, research, and education

At Karolinska University Hospital, research and innovation are embedded in daily clinical practice to develop healthcare delivery and educate future medical experts.

Karolinska University Hospital strives to be a global leader in medical innovation and technological development, including digitalization and artificial intelligence (AI).

Through a strong partnership with Karolinska Institutet and other leading institutions, Karolinska University Hospital integrates research, innovation, and clinical practice to shape the future of healthcare. Groundbreaking research, clinical trials, and advanced education are conducted to enable new treatment modalities, improve patient safety, and support continuous quality improvement.

International collaboration, the use of health data, and a strong academic culture are key drivers of medical breakthroughs that strengthen Sweden's position in the life sciences sector.

Karolinska University Hospital takes pride in advancing medicine and creating the conditions for the healthcare of tomorrow. In 2025, significant progress was made in treatment methods, diagnostics, care pathways, workflows, and collaborative models. Several examples are described below.

Photo: Joakim Lindberg

TAVI surgery.

## Best in Sweden at heart valve procedures

According to the national quality registry Swedeheart, Karolinska University Hospital reports the best outcomes in Sweden for TAVI (transcatheter aortic valve implantation) – a minimally invasive procedure for the treatment of aortic valve stenosis.

Aortic stenosis is a condition in which the aortic valve becomes narrowed, restricting blood flow from the heart. This can result in severe symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain (angina), and fainting, and may ultimately lead to heart failure or death if untreated.

Thirty-day mortality is one of the most important indicators of high-quality care. Year after year, Karolinska University Hospital has demonstrated the best outcomes in Sweden. The 2024 report, published in early 2025, confirms continued excellence – while the hospital also performs the highest number of TAVI procedures in the Nordic region.

Karolinska University Hospital reports a 30-day mortality rate of 0.4%, significantly below the national average of 1.8%.

For the second consecutive year, the hospital also ranks highest in Sweden in terms of access to TAVI treatment. Just over 20% of patients waited longer than 60 days for treatment, compared with the national average of 40%.

Source: Swedeheart



## National leader in life-saving treatment for pacemaker patients

Karolinska University Hospital hosts Sweden's largest program in transvenous lead extraction, a life-saving procedure for patients with pacemakers or implantable cardioverter-defibrillators (ICDs). Transvenous lead extraction involves removing intracardiac leads.

This service is part of Sweden's National Highly Specialized Care (NHV) program. According to the latest national evaluation, the hospital provides the best access to care and quality outcomes comparable to the other three designated national centers.

In 2025, the hospital achieved 100% compliance with the national requirement to treat designated high-priority patient groups within one week.



Multiprofessional team from Cancer Theme.

Photo: Ylva Hermansson

## Transforming the treatment of rectal cancer

With a new treatment modality, more patients with rectal cancer can avoid surgical resection of the rectum and permanent colostomy.

The organ-preserving treatment contact X-ray brachytherapy (CXB), also known as the Papillon technique, given in combination with conventional radiotherapy and chemotherapy, has demonstrated highly favorable outcomes in a large international study.

The first treatments at Karolinska University Hospital were performed in February 2025, and a total of 26 patients received treatment during the year.

*With the new treatment modality, many with rectal cancer can avoid surgical resection of the rectum.*



## Common analgesic reduces recurrence of colorectal cancer

After breast and prostate cancer, colorectal cancer is the most common malignancy among both men and women. Given its relatively high mortality rate and fewer available treatment options compared with other common cancers, there is a substantial need for new research and therapeutic strategies.

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet and Karolinska University Hospital initiated the ALASCCA trial to investigate whether the over-the-counter medication acetylsalicylic acid (e.g., aspirin) could prevent recurrence of colorectal cancer. The results of the trial demonstrated that the risk of recurrence was reduced by more than half in patients with specific tumor mutations.



Photo: Ylva Hermansson

## Higher-precision radiation therapy improves patient care

In November 2025, Karolinska University Hospital became the first hospital in Sweden to implement a new type of high-efficiency radiation therapy.

The new linear accelerators enable shorter treatment sessions, improved imaging quality, and AI-assisted software support. The system can automatically contour adjacent organs at risk and suggest optimized radiation plans for each treatment session.

This allows clinicians to adapt treatment daily based on anatomical changes. For example, variations in bowel filling or tumor position can be accounted for in real time.

“We are very pleased and proud. With the new machines, we can individualize radiation therapy according to each patient’s unique anatomy throughout the entire treatment course. We can reduce radiation exposure to surrounding organs while ensuring an adequate dose to the tumor. This improves treatment efficacy and reduces the risk of adverse effects,” explains Anna Sundeman, Nurse Manager at the Radiation Therapy Department, Karolinska Comprehensive Cancer Center.

## New groundbreaking cancer therapy under evaluation

The Theranostics Trial Center is a newly established research center focused on targeted therapies, primarily in oncology. It is a joint initiative between Karolinska University Hospital and Karolinska Institutet and the first center of its kind in the Nordic region.

In 2025, the first patient was dosed with a targeted alpha therapy using an actinium-225 ( $^{225}\text{Ac}$ )-based radio-pharmaceutical as part of a sponsored clinical trial.

Targeted alpha therapy represents a new generation of precision oncology treatment, offering very high biological efficacy with minimal impact on surrounding healthy tissue. This type of radionuclide therapy has the potential to provide new treatment options for patients with hard-to-treat cancers.

# Numerous AI projects across the hospital

Using artificial intelligence (AI), Karolinska University Hospital is taking further steps toward smarter, more patient-centered care. Below are several examples of AI-driven initiatives currently underway across the hospital.

## 1 AI-supported planning for mobile blood donation units

An AI-enabled software for data-driven scheduling of mobile blood donation units across Region Stockholm is underway. The project aims to ensure a stable and accessible blood supply, reduce staff workload, and enhance flexibility in emergency situations.

## 2 AI tools for clinical text processing

Karolinska University Hospital is developing region-wide AI solutions for predictive analytics and natural language processing (NLP). The focus is on streamlining point-of-care administrative tasks, improving efficiency, and enhancing clinicians' ability to make proactive, data-driven decisions.

## 3 Study of AI in skin cancer diagnostics

An AI-based clinical decision support system for assessing suspected skin cancer using teledermoscopy is being studied. By studying physician-technology interaction in the clinical environment, researchers are examining how AI can be safely implemented to augment clinical decision-making.

## 4 AI for surgical planning

An AI-based predictive tool has been developed to estimate operative times, enabling more resource-efficient and accurate operating room scheduling.

[Read more](#)

## 5 AI to detect child abuse

An AI-powered educational tool enables healthcare professionals to practice identifying signs of child abuse. The tool allows staff to engage in simulated conversations via chatbot with child avatars presenting different background scenarios. The platform also includes digital coaching and performance evaluation components.

## 6 Virtual twin for patients with type 2 diabetes

Karolinska University Hospital is participating in a large EU-funded initiative in AI and precision medicine. A "virtual twin" model is being developed to support clinicians in delivering more personalized care to patients with type 2 diabetes. By training AI models on clinical data, researchers aim to create digital replicas of patients that can simulate treatment responses and guide individualized therapeutic strategies.



Photo: Mats Glaser

## New AI model increases surgical capacity

By leveraging AI technology to optimize surgical scheduling, Karolinska University Hospital has implemented an innovative solution demonstrating promising results. The model provides dynamic, context-adaptive forecasts, contributing to more efficient resource utilization.

The solution integrates data from existing hospital information systems. An AI model analyzes and predicts the duration of different phases of surgical care: preoperative preparation, intraoperative time, and postoperative recovery. The goal is to improve time estimates and enable more accurate scheduling of operating rooms and staff.

Early results show a substantial improvement in predictive accuracy, measured as a reduction in mean absolute error (MAE). On one occasion, more than one hour of scheduled operating room time was saved.

Compared with originally scheduled times, the AI-predicted times were 50% closer to actual outcomes for preoperative time, 20% closer for intraoperative time, and 40% closer for postoperative time.

“The AI-driven solution is part of Karolinska University Hospital’s broader efforts to develop new tools that strengthen healthcare capacity and efficiency. Through these initiatives, we aim to stabilize surgical scheduling, reduce overtime and case cancellations, increase surgical throughput, and further improve the patient experience,” says Joel Preger, Chief AI Officer at Karolinska University Hospital.



## Establishment of an AI Council

An AI council has been established at Karolinska University Hospital. Its mission is to guide AI initiatives from concept to implementation and to develop a clear AI strategy and governance framework.

The council also supports other region-owned healthcare providers. It brings together expertise in clinical medicine, information technology, biomedical engineering, legal affairs, and procurement to enable comprehensive evaluations and rapid deployment of AI projects.



## 50 years of world-leading development in allogeneic stem cell transplantation

The CAST unit (Cell Therapy and Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplantation) at Karolinska University Hospital is one of Europe's most specialized clinical environments for stem cell transplantation and a pioneer in immunotherapies and gene therapies.

The first allogeneic bone marrow transplantation in Sweden was performed 50 years ago—the beginning of a development trajectory that positions Karolinska University Hospital among the world's leading centers for allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT) and advanced cell and gene therapies.

Allogeneic stem cell transplantation is used to treat leukemias and other severe hematologic disorders.

Among the most significant recent advances are CAR T-cell therapies, in which a patient's own T lymphocytes are genetically engineered to target malignant cells. CAST treated Sweden's first patients with CAR T-cell therapy in routine clinical practice and participates in groundbreaking clinical trials evaluating novel CAR T-cell products.

## Cancer center consolidates leading expertise

Karolinska Comprehensive Cancer Center (CCC) provides highly specialized oncology care and cancer research through a collaboration between Karolinska University Hospital and Karolinska Institutet.

One milestone in 2025 was the renewal of accreditation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center through 2030. Among the priority initiatives is the establishment of the Karolinska CCC Project Unit, responsible for coordinating and participating in multiple EU-funded projects under Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.

## Inauguration of Karolinska ATMP Center

The Karolinska ATMP Center develops innovative therapies for previously incurable diseases using cell therapy, gene therapy, and tissue-engineered products. ATMP stands for advanced therapy medicinal products, a regulatory category encompassing gene therapies, somatic cell therapies, and tissue-engineered products.

These advanced, personalized therapies are based on genes, cells, or tissues and have the potential to cure diseases in ways not previously possible. In August 2025, the center was officially inaugurated. It is a joint initiative between Karolinska University Hospital and Karolinska Institutet and provides infrastructure for research, clinical trials, GMP-compliant manufacturing of advanced therapies, and patient treatment.

Photo: Liza Simonsson



Patient Bosse receiving care at home.

Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

## Safe and advanced care at home

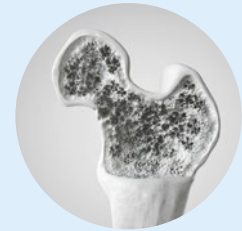
Karolinska University Hospital aims to expand the delivery of advanced medical care in the home setting. The goal is to enable more patients to remain at home while maintaining safe and continuous contact with the hospital.

This may include remote monitoring and telehealth services, support for patient self-management, and proactive interventions to prevent deterioration in chronic and complex conditions. Patients experience increased engagement in their care, improved safety, and enhanced quality of life, while hospital length of stay is reduced.

### Preoperative geriatric clinic

In 2023, a perioperative geriatric clinic was established at Karolinska University Hospital in Solna. Based on positive outcomes, a corresponding clinic opened in Huddinge in 2025.

The clinic provides comprehensive preoperative assessments for elderly patients with multimorbidity. Patients are evaluated by a geriatric nurse specialist, physical therapist, anesthesiologist, and geriatrician.



### New regional center of excellence for osteoporosis

Karolinska University Hospital has been commissioned by Region Stockholm to establish a new regional center of excellence for osteoporosis, with the aim of improving both treatment and prevention of fragility fractures.

The center will serve as the regional hub for osteoporosis care, provide clinical guidance, advance methods and best practices, and conduct research in collaboration with Karolinska Institutet.



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

## New advances driven by systematic follow-up

Karolinska University Hospital works systematically to improve the quality of care, treatment outcomes, patient interactions, and patient engagement.

Continuous evaluation of outcomes and patient-reported experiences is fundamental to achieving world-class care. Therefore, patients' perceptions of clinical outcomes, communication, information, and involvement in care serve as the foundation for ongoing development efforts.

Following hospital visits, patients complete various evaluations, primarily in the form of structured surveys.

Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) provide valuable insight into how treatments affect patients over time and enable benchmarking against other healthcare providers. Patient-Reported Experience Measures (PREMs) include questions regarding communication, information, and involvement in care. Additionally, a National Patient Survey is conducted every two years to assess overall patient experience.

*Monitoring patient experience and clinical outcomes is the cornerstone of systematic quality improvement.*

**Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROM)**

**The hospital utilizes 250 standardized PROM measurements across specialties:**

Cardiology	7
Cardiothoracic Surgery	4
Endocrinology (including Andrology)	35
Gastroenterology	10
Neurology	10
Neurosurgery	10
Obstetrics and Gynecology	9
Oncology	25
Orthopedics and Trauma	10
Pediatrics	25
Psychology	36
Pulmonology	15
Urology	9
Other specialties	45

*(Number of PROM instruments per medical specialty as of November 2025.)*

**High patient satisfaction in Allied Health Professionals**

PREMs are used to measure patient satisfaction with clinical visits. Allied Health Professionals demonstrate particularly strong results. In 2025, 97% of patients reported that their visit to Allied Health Professionals’ outpatient clinics was “good” or “very good,” matching the high results from 2024.

Allied Health Professionals include occupational therapists, dietitians, physical therapists, social workers, speech-language pathologists, and psychologists. These services provide approximately 120,000 visits annually to patients of varying ages and clinical pathways.



**93.9%**

of 73,559 adults reported their hospital visit as “good” or “very good” in PREM surveys.

**Stable Results in the National Patient Survey**

To enable national comparisons of patients’ experiences of healthcare and healthcare visits as a whole, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions conducts the National Patient Survey (NPE) every two years. In 2025,

8,922 patients from Karolinska University Hospital participated in the survey, with a response rate of 43.2%. Results for Karolinska University Hospital have improved and are now higher than those of other hospitals in Sweden.

*The results are higher than those of other hospitals in Sweden.*

	2023	2025
Specialist Outpatient Care	90.0	91.7
Specialist Inpatient Care	90.0	90.1

*Weighted mean score of patient satisfaction, where 100 represents the highest possible score and 0 the lowest.*

## New method extends organ viability prior to transplantation

In 2025, Karolinska University Hospital became the first hospital in the Nordic region to launch a program for ex vivo normothermic liver perfusion. The method maintains the liver in a physiological, perfused state outside the body, allowing the organ to remain viable while its function is assessed prior to transplantation. The technology represents several important advances in transplantation medicine:

1. Organs that were previously considered uncertain can now be evaluated and, in some cases, approved for transplantation. This enables more organs to be used, increasing the potential to save lives.
2. Organs can be maintained in a viable state for up to 24 hours, enabling improved logistical planning and reducing the need for emergency procedures.
3. Transplantation procedures can more often be scheduled during daytime hours, supporting a better work environment.

## New test facilitates treatment decisions in ovarian cancer

Karolinska University Hospital is the first in Sweden to introduce a diagnostic test for patients with high-grade ovarian cancer. The test evaluates genomic instability, measuring the cancer cells' tendency to accumulate DNA mutations. High levels of genomic instability are associated with faster tumor progression and an increased risk of drug resistance. Patients with high genomic instability may benefit from adjunct therapy with PARP inhibitors, which exploit cancer cells' impaired ability to repair DNA damage and can improve treatment outcomes. Compared with previous methods, the new test provides shorter turnaround times and broader patient coverage. The test was developed in collaboration with Karolinska Institutet and SciLifeLab.



Photo: Oscar Segerström

Organ transplant in progress in Huddinge.



## Advanced transplantation in collaboration with Södersjukhuset

An advanced bilateral hand transplantation was carried out through a collaboration between Södersjukhuset and Karolinska University Hospital. A patient who had previously lost both hands due to a severe infection underwent the procedure in 2025. The operation lasted 19 hours and involved approximately 40 healthcare professionals from the two hospitals. The procedure—only the second of its kind in Sweden—represents an important step forward for advanced reconstructive surgery and transplantation medicine.

## Genetic investigation of vascular malformations

New advanced genetic diagnostic methods for the investigation of congenital vascular malformations have been developed at Karolinska University Hospital. By analyzing tissue samples using deep exome sequencing and digital PCR technology, clinicians have increased the proportion of patients receiving a correct diagnosis from 21 percent to 65 percent.

*The proportion of patients receiving a correct diagnosis has increased from 21 to 65 percent.*

Karolinska University Hospital is the only hospital in Sweden applying this method for the genetic investigation of vascular malformations. The approach supports precision medicine and improved quality of life for patients, while the hospital also contributes to the development of international treatment guidelines.

### FACTS

#### Congenital vascular malformations:

- are classified as low-flow, high-flow, or combined malformations
- may damage surrounding tissues
- symptoms can range from cosmetic concerns to life-threatening conditions.



Miriam Elfström,  
Head of the Center for Cervical  
Cancer Elimination.

## Progress toward the elimination of cervical cancer

In August, leading experts, policymakers and project partners from across Sweden convened at Karolinska University Hospital to take the next step towards eliminating cervical cancer in Sweden.

“The national goal is to achieve elimination of cervical cancer in Sweden by 31 December 2027. Until the end of June 2025, we focused on simultaneous HPV vaccination and screening of women born between 1994 and 1999 to halt the spread of HPV in age groups where the infection is still circulating. Moving forward, we will place greater emphasis on the second phase of the elimination project—ensuring that everyone is reached with an offer of HPV screening,” says Miriam Elfström, Head of the Center for Cervical Cancer Elimination, a specialized HPV laboratory, analyzing all screening samples in Region Stockholm.



Photo: Nneka Magnusson Arnu

Patient Markku with student Emmelie Juhlin Parsfelt.

## Clinical education with a focus on interprofessional collaboration

Over the years, 1,600 students have passed through the doors of the Infectious Diseases Department in Huddinge. In 2025, its Clinical Education Unit celebrated 20 years. Here, students are given the opportunity to practice clinical work and patient care based on their individual learning objectives. Karolinska University Hospital has several clinical education wards and outpatient clinics. What distin-

guishes this unit is the longer clinical placements and the presence of students at different stages of their education.

“I help translate learning theories and research findings into our daily clinical practice and identify needs for further research,” says Katri Manninen, educational coordinator.

## New training program to increase the number of clinical investigators

In 2025, Karolinska University Hospital and Region Stockholm opened applications for the regional Clinical Trialist Training Program for board-certified specialist physicians and residents nearing the completion of their training.

The program, which will start in March 2026, aims to introduce more physicians to the role of principal investigator and strengthen Region Stockholm's capacity for conducting clinical drug trials.

The principal investigator is one of the key roles in a clinical drug trial, whose expertise is crucial both for the scientific outcomes of the trial and for the safety of study participants.

## Medical students streamline clinical trials in pilot project

Karolinska University Hospital has hired two medical students to recruit patients for a clinical trial, with Medicinska Föreningen serving as the recruitment hub. The project is a collaboration between Karolinska Institutet, Karolinska University Hospital, AstraZeneca, and Medicinska Föreningen.

The number of clinical drug trials has decreased over the past two decades. To improve efficiency, several projects at the hospital are exploring new ways of working and technological solutions.

## International nursing leadership program

In early September, nurse leaders from several European countries gathered at Karolinska University Hospital for the second edition of the Nursing Management Program. Participants developed their leadership competencies, exchanged professional experiences, and explored innovative approaches to the future delivery of healthcare.

The program focused on change management, quality improvement, team resilience, and workforce planning. Through clinical site visits, case-based discussions, and collaborative learning, participants connected theoretical perspectives with clinical practice and gained practical strategies.



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

Ingela Nilsson, Care Team Manager at Karolinska University Hospital, and Ragna María, Senior Nurse Manager at Landspítali University Hospital.

### DIVE DEEPER!

Scan the QR code to watch the 2025 film.



## New strategy for research, education and development

Karolinska University Hospital has adopted a new strategy for research, education and development for the period 2025–2027. The strategy aims to strengthen the hospital's academic environment, improve access to health data, double external research funding, and promote early research career development.

By focusing on seven strategic priority areas, the hospital seeks to help ensure that Sweden remains a world-leading player in clinical research and medical innovation, ultimately strengthening patient benefit through faster implementation of new treatment methods.



### Seven strategic priority areas

The strategy outlines seven key areas in which the hospital has set long-term objectives, with concrete initiatives planned for the coming three years.

#### 1 Improving access to health data

- Establish a central function for healthcare data sources and a shared platform for data access.
- Strengthen collaboration with Region Stockholm and Karolinska Institutet to streamline data sharing.

#### 2 Increasing external research funding

- Double external research grants over the next decade.
- Strengthen partnerships with private donors and industry.

#### 3 Promoting early research and sustainable career development

- Lower the average age at doctoral completion among clinically active physicians.
- Increase recruitment from undergraduate programs and healthcare professions.

#### 4 Strengthening the educational culture

- Enhance the attractiveness of educational responsibilities.
- Engage more experienced experts in teaching and supervision.

#### 5 Developing infrastructure for clinical studies

- Establish competence centers supporting clinical studies.
- Simplify administrative processes and strengthen structures for clinical trials.

#### 6 Implementing and advancing AI

- Consolidate Karolinska University Hospital's position as a global leader in healthcare AI.
- Establish a platform for AI collaboration between healthcare, research and industry.

#### 7 Strengthening the academic culture

- Improve the physical integration of healthcare, research and education.
- Expand interdisciplinary seminars and strengthen collaboration with preclinical researchers.



**2,560**

active researchers

**2.11**

citation impact

**2.50**

billion SEK in external research funding in collaboration with Karolinska Institutet

**250**

principal investigators

**1,730**

planned and ongoing clinical studies (January 2026)

**38,072**

completed student weeks

**1,219**

employees in Region Stockholm have completed training and obtained Good Clinical Practice (GCP) certification

**53**

research nurses in Region Stockholm have been trained at Karolinska University Hospital



## Double recognition at the Innovation Fund Day

At the Innovation Fund Day on 1 October 2025, two innovation projects from Karolinska University Hospital received awards.

### Innovation of the year - the pediatric medication group's AI project

The project explores how artificial intelligence can be used to streamline the management of pediatric drug information within the national clinical decision support system ePed.

The aim is for AI to support the process of identifying and integrating new knowledge when medication guidelines are published. This approach may simplify updates and ensure that large volumes of information are managed reliably, while also enabling new research findings to be incorporated more efficiently.

### Implementation of the year - "Awakening sleep"

Sleep is a fundamental prerequisite for recovery, yet it is often overlooked in hospital settings.

The "Awakening sleep" project focuses on improving patients' night-time sleep and can be implemented through three components:

- A web-based training program for all staff working with hospitalized patients
- Evidence-based clinical guidelines
- A model with designated sleep nurses.





## Quality registries strengthen healthcare and research

Karolinska University Hospital has been appointed the central personal data controller authority (CPUA) for the national quality registries within Region Stockholm and is therefore responsible for 53 registries.

This consolidated mandate creates new opportunities to use data more effectively to advance both healthcare delivery and research. National quality registries are among the healthcare system's most important tools for systematic quality improvement and are a key resource for clinical research.

## Successful diabetes care

The diabetes clinic at Karolinska University Hospital continued to deliver strong treatment outcomes for patients with diabetes in 2025. Data from the Swedish National Diabetes Register show that the hospital achieved one of the country's most significant improvements in HbA1c (glycated hemoglobin), despite challenges such as a higher prevalence of overweight among patients.

David Nathanson, Head of the Department of Endocrinology, reports that progress has also been observed in lipid management. Patients with type 1 diabetes achieved the lowest LDL cholesterol levels in Sweden in 2025, attributable to active research efforts and the implementation of care programs including statin therapy.

The hospital has also demonstrated improvements in outcomes reported to the Swedish Pituitary Registry, supported by structured clinical care and systematic registry work.



Photo: Joakim Lindberg

## Ranked among the world's best hospitals

The international magazine Newsweek publishes annual global hospital rankings, and in the 2025 edition of "World's Best Hospitals," Karolinska University Hospital ranked fifth globally, making it the highest-ranked hospital in Europe for the second time.

The hospital also appears in Newsweek's "World's Best Specialized Hospitals" ranking across all twelve medical specialties evaluated. Compared with the previous year, six specialties improved their ranking positions: gastroenterology, obstetrics and gynecology, oncology, pediatrics, pulmonology, and urology.

In addition, Newsweek ranks the world's most technologically advanced hospitals

in "World's Best Smart Hospitals." These institutions are recognized for adopting innovative technologies that enhance patient outcomes, including artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, digital imaging, telemedicine, advanced electronic systems, and virtual reality (VR).

In this ranking, Karolinska University Hospital placed 11th globally, two positions higher than in 2024. The hospital is particularly recognized for its implementation of AI, robotics, and telemedicine.

*Karolinska University Hospital was ranked the fifth best hospital in the world in 2025 by Newsweek, making it the highest-ranked hospital in Europe.*

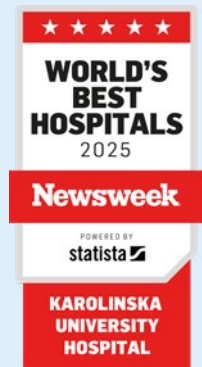




Photo: Charlotte Elf

## Minimizing sedation with play therapy approach

In 2025, a new clinical approach was developed in which play therapy is used to prepare children for radiation therapy. Through educational activities and gradual familiarization, treatment can in many cases be performed without general anesthesia.

For an individual patient, this approach may avoid up to 30 anesthesia procedures.

Instead of requiring a full day of preparation and recovery, radiation treatment can often be completed in a matter of minutes.

The model was inspired by practices at The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Canada.

## Transforming pediatric care with XR technology

At Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital, a project is underway in which extended reality (XR) is used as a distraction technique for children undergoing painful or uncomfortable procedures, such as blood sampling.

Extended reality includes both virtual reality (VR), where the patient is fully immersed in a digital three-dimensional environment, and augmented reality (AR), where digital elements are integrated into the real-world view through AR glasses. Several pediatric departments at Karolinska University Hospital have implemented or tested XR technology with positive results.



Photo: Sara Dinwidie



13,992

visits to the play therapy unit in 2025.



Photo: Olle Borg

Some of the child rights representatives who completed training in 2025.

## Child rights representatives promote children's participation in care

Child rights representatives play an important role in ensuring that the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are upheld in healthcare settings. They promote children's participation in their care, support managers in child rights matters, and contribute to child impact assessments.

These assessments highlight children's rights and are conducted prior to decisions or organizational changes that may affect them. The training program brings together staff from healthcare units across the region with the goal of strengthening children's rights in healthcare. To date, 401 people have completed the training.

## International exchanges strengthen pediatric care

Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital maintains strong collaborations with several international healthcare partners, including institutions in Uganda and Tanzania. In 2025, collaborators from Uganda participated in joint meetings and site visits at Karolinska University Hospital. The partnership involves Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital, Karolinska Institutet, Mbarara Regional Referral Hospital, and the medical research institute Epicentre. A long-standing international research collaboration between Sweden and Uganda focuses on infections associated with pediatric cancer treatment. By comparing clinical data and biological samples from children in both countries, researchers aim to identify improved strategies to predict, prevent, and treat infections in pediatric oncology patients.

In 2025, the long-term partnership with Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam continued. As part of this collaboration, the neonatal unit hosted colleagues from Muhimbili National Hospital for a three-week exchange program focusing on clinical practice, training, and shared learning. The collaboration is initiated through



Photo: Olle Borg

Staff from Muhimbili National Hospital during training exercises at Karolinska University Hospital.

the Pediatric Health Initiative and aims to advance neonatal care through knowledge exchange and long-term institutional partnerships. The program contributes to the continued development of healthcare quality in both countries, while experiences from resource-limited and high-demand healthcare systems provide valuable perspectives on clinical prioritization and ways of working.



## Providing accessible care

The goal is to help everyone who needs the hospital's expertise and to provide safe, high-quality care and treatment at the right time.

For patients, accessibility means receiving care when needed. Timely access to diagnostic procedures and treatment is essential to reduce anxiety and improve health outcomes. Karolinska University Hospital also carries a national responsibility to contribute to equitable access to highly specialized care and serves as a university hospital for the entire country.

For society, accessible healthcare means that resources are used efficiently to improve public health while maintaining cost-effectiveness. When healthcare is accessible to everyone, the conditions for a more equitable and healthy society are strengthened.

Improving production and capacity planning, as well as reducing reliance on temporary staffing, are important steps toward achieving this goal. Delivering care of the highest quality requires continuous improvement as well as collaboration—regionally, nationally, and internationally. Efforts to increase access to care include improved processes, more efficient methods, and collaboration with experts both nationally and globally.

The following pages present selected examples from 2025.



Surgical schedulers.

## Reduced surgical waiting lists in otorhinolaryngology

In 2025, Karolinska University Hospital successfully reduced surgical waiting lists in otorhinolaryngology (ENT). At the beginning of the year, 300 patients had waited more than 90 days for surgery; one year later, the number had decreased to 38.

*Over the course of one year, the number of patients waiting more than 90 days for surgery decreased by approximately 87 percent.*

According to Henrik Smeds, Head of the ENT Department, two key factors contributed to the improvement: strong access to operating rooms and effective surgical scheduling. He emphasizes the critical role of the department's surgical planners, who continuously work to optimize patient volumes across allocated operating rooms to ensure that surgical resources are used as efficiently as possible.

ENT surgical services are provided at the hospital's sites in Solna, Huddinge, and Danderyd, performing approximately 5,500 surgical procedures annually.



## Successful collaboration in hip fracture care

KIn 2025, Karolinska University Hospital exceeded the national target for hip fracture surgery, with 81 percent of patients undergoing surgery within 24 hours.

Patients with hip fractures require prompt surgical intervention to reduce morbidity and mortality. The national target is that 75 percent of patients receive surgery within 24 hours. In 2020, the corresponding figure at the hospital was 66 percent, prompting the launch of a targeted improvement initiative.

Hip fracture management involves multiple clinical pathways within the hospital. The review identified opportunities to strengthen collaboration between these units. Hip fracture management was also established as a quality indicator at Karolinska University Hospital, ensuring that outcomes are evaluated quarterly. The initiative proved successful, with the hospital exceeding the national target in both 2024 and 2025.

### Number of patients with hip fractures that get surgery within 24 hours

Year	%
2021	63
2022	68
2023	71
2024	83
2025	81
National target	75



Photo: Mats Glaser

## Shortest surgical waiting times in Sweden

The surgical services at Karolinska University Hospital in Solna continue to report some of the shortest surgical waiting times in Sweden.

According to data from the national database Swedish Perioperative Register (SPOR), the hospital's surgical services in Solna ranked among the top performers nationally in 2025 despite performing a very high number of procedures.

The SPOR database monitors waiting times, capacity, and quality in perioperative care. For the period September–November, Solna ranked fourth in the country, with a median waiting time of 25 days, compared with a national average of 80 days.

In the full-year dataset for January–November 2025, Karolinska University Hospital in Solna ranked third nationally, while performing more than 16,000 surgical procedures during the same period.

*The Solna site maintains short waiting times despite high surgical volumes.*

Photo: Josefine Franking



## Support for complex hospital discharge processes

Efficient discharge processes are essential to free up hospital resources and improve patient flow. At the same time, a well-managed discharge process enhances safety and reassurance for both patients and their families.

Some discharges are more complex than others, for example when patients require extensive social or community-based care after leaving the hospital.

Four medical social workers assist by:

- Providing guidance to inpatient wards in complex discharge cases.
- Supporting in time-consuming and complicated cases.
- Offering internal training on topics such as patient rights, municipal support services, and cross-border healthcare.
- Assisting hospital units in developing structured routines for safe and efficient discharge processes.

*In complex discharge cases, the goal is to create structure and clarity—for both health-care professionals and patients.*



Photo: Danish Saroee

The hospital's own helicopter responded to 258 helicopter dispatches in 2025.

## Pediatric emergency transport service celebrates 20 years

The Pediatric Emergency Transport Service (PETS) was established in 2005 at Karolinska University Hospital. The service transports critically ill children aged 0-18 years between hospitals, with specialized pediatric nurses and physicians. The service averages 270 transports per year.

Transport missions are conducted by ambulance, helicopter, or aircraft, operating 24 hours a day, year-round. The patients require intensive care for severe medical conditions such as congenital

heart defects, surgical complications, or traumatic injuries.

Helicopters are commonly used by PETS for domestic transport, while aircraft are used for longer international transfers, including to Iceland and Ireland.

PETS has reached destinations as distant as Argentina and Japan. In cooperation with the Swedish Armed Forces, the team has also transported patients from Mali, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Photo: Josefine Franking



Kajsa Norén and Paula Stjernkvist.

## Support for surgical patients with special needs

At Karolinska University Hospital, an initiative has been launched to improve care for patients with neurodevelopmental or intellectual disabilities. These patients often require specialized planning and, in some cases, general anesthesia to undergo diagnostic procedures such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

Adapted clinical routines have been introduced to better address patients' individual needs and previous healthcare experiences. Staff members Kajsa Norén and Paula Stjernkvist developed these routines to coordinate diagnostic examinations and laboratory tests for this patient group. The initiative has received positive feedback, and there are plans to expand the approach both within Karolinska University Hospital and to other healthcare providers.



## Reduced waiting times at the adult emergency department

The adult emergency department in Huddinge implemented targeted measures in the autumn of 2025 to reduce waiting times. By the end of the year, the waiting time from completed treatment in the emergency department to admission to an inpatient ward had decreased by 30 minutes.

These improvements are the result of broad collaboration across the hospital. The changes enhance patient safety and reassurance and improve the work environment for staff.

## National Specialized Medical Care

Karolinska University Hospital is a leading provider of National Specialized Medical Care (NHV) in Sweden, serving patients from across the country. The hospital holds the highest number of NHV licenses in Sweden, covering particularly rare or hard-to-treat diagnoses and areas of care. According to Swedish law, National Specialized Medical Care can be provided by a maximum of five healthcare units in the country, aiming to enhance expertise, quality, and patient safety. This centralization ensures that more patients have access to high-quality specialized medical care. Karolinska University Hospital currently holds 41 NHV licenses:

- Advanced pelvic surgery
- Anorectal and urogenital malformations and Hirschsprung disease
- Cervical cancer
- Chronic lung diseases in children
- Coagulation disorders
- Congenital diaphragmatic hernia
- Congenital immunological disorders
- Congenital malformations of the esophagus
- Congenital metabolic disorders, including newborn screening
- Curative treatment of vulvar cancer
- Differences in Sex Development (DSD)
- Dysmelia
- EXIT procedure
- Extraction of cardiac pacemaker leads
- Fetal therapy (including intrauterine interventions)
- Gestational trophoblastic disease
- High-level isolation care for patients with highly infectious diseases
- Hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy (HIPEC)
- Intensive care in cases where liver transplantation may be indicated
- Intestinal rehabilitation for children
- Liver transplantation
- Lymphedema surgery
- Management of intestinal failure in adults
- Mesh surgery for pelvic organ prolapse
- Moyamoya disease
- Neuroendocrine tumors of the abdomen and advanced adrenal tumors
- Neuromuscular disorders
- Osteogenesis imperfecta (OI)
- Preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD)
- Primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC)
- Rare kidney diseases
- Reconstructive surgery for inflammatory bowel disease
- Retroperitoneal lymph node dissection for testicular cancer
- Severe dermatological conditions
- Skeletal dysplasia
- Specialized care for gender dysphoria
- Spinal cord injury
- Stem cell transplantation for systemic sclerosis
- Systemic amyloidosis
- Transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS)
- Treatment of children with cochlear implants

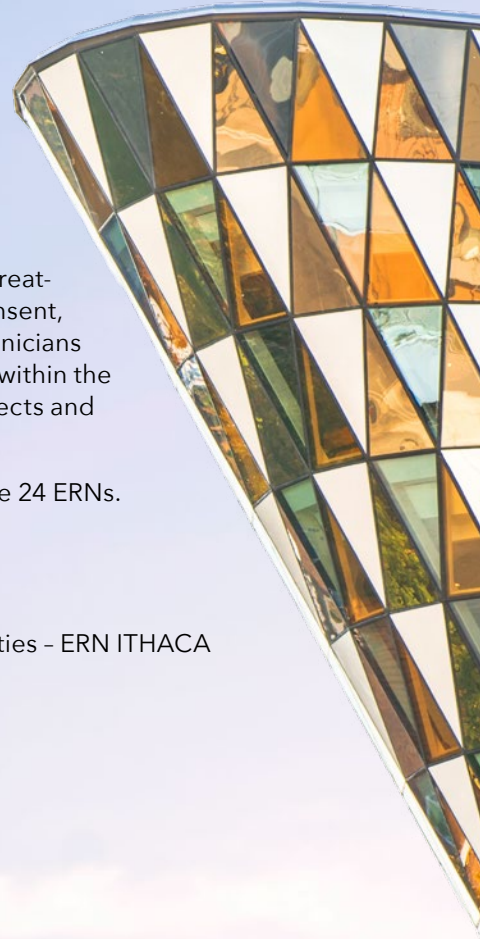
## Networks bringing together international expertise

The European Reference Networks (ERNs) connect leading clinical expertise across Europe to address complex and rare medical conditions that require highly concentrated specialized knowledge and resources.

These networks support physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of rare and complex diseases. With the patient's consent, and in accordance with Swedish healthcare legislation, clinicians can exchange clinical information and consult specialists within the networks. ERNs also promote collaborative research projects and cross-border research programs.

Karolinska University Hospital is a member of 20 out of the 24 ERNs. The hospital participates in the following networks:

- Adult cancers (solid tumors) - ERN EURACAN
- Congenital gastrointestinal malformations - ERNICA
- Congenital malformations and rare intellectual disabilities - ERN ITHACA
- Craniofacial malformations and Ear, Nose, and Throat disorders - ERN CRANIO
- Endocrine disorders - Endo-ERN
- Genetic tumor risk syndromes - ERN GENTURIS
- Hematological diseases - EuroBloodNet
- Hepatological diseases - ERN RARE-LIVER
- Inherited metabolic disorders - MetabERN
- Kidney diseases - ERKNet
- Multisystemic vascular diseases - VASCERN
- Musculoskeletal and connective tissue diseases - ERN ReCONNET
- Neuromuscular diseases - ERN EURO-NMD
- Pediatric cancer (hemato-oncology) - ERN PaedCan
- Pediatric transplantation - ERN TRANSPLANT-CHILD
- Primary immunodeficiency, autoinflammatory, and autoimmune diseases - ERN RITA
- Rare bone disorders - ERN BOND
- Rare neurological diseases - ERN-RND
- Respiratory diseases - ERN LUNG
- Urogenital diseases and conditions - ERN eUROGEN



10



Photo: Malin Jochumsen

## Care for patients from across Sweden

Karolinska University Hospital serves as a national referral center, providing advanced medical care to patients from across Sweden and supporting other healthcare providers and regions when collaboration or specialized expertise is required. Through self-referral, patients may seek outpatient care at the hospital regardless of their place of residence.

Karolinska University Hospital offers the broadest range of services within Sweden's national specialized medical care framework (NHV). In 2025, the hospital treated 20,991 patients from other regions, accounting for 64,270 outpatient visits and 5,496 inpatient admissions.

In addition to in-person care, the hospital's clinics provide support to external healthcare providers through consultations, on-call advisory services, digital patient

encounters, and multidisciplinary conferences. By maintaining high levels of accessibility, quality, and collaboration, waiting times are reduced and access to highly specialized care is improved.

During the year, all agreements with Karolinska University Hospital's partner regions were renegotiated and now apply to the 2026–2030 period. Ongoing collaboration with Gotland has also been further developed. To establish long-term conditions for inter-regional care, ensure appropriate pricing levels, and enhance transparency and predictability for other regions, a comprehensive review of the inter-regional pricing structure was conducted. The revised structure facilitates improved monitoring of quality, outcomes, and costs, and contributes to a more efficient billing process.



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

Coworkers at the International Patient Office (IPO).

## Hub for international patients

The International Patient Office (IPO) serves as the central coordination hub for international patients at Karolinska University Hospital. In 2025, IPO managed approximately 1,000 patient cases, primarily from the Nordic countries. These include patients who are unable to access care in their home countries for various reasons or who seek a second opinion.

The unit also supports other healthcare providers within the region. IPO coordinates the entire patient journey, collects relevant medical documentation, and manages communication between the patient, referring provider, and clinical teams.

*In 2025, IPO managed approximately 1,000 patient cases, primarily from the Nordic countries.*

This work is enabled and strengthened by the International Patient Portal, the hospital's digital platform for international patient engagement. The platform ensures secure and efficient communication and information exchange among IPO, patients, and clinical services. In 2025, the portal continued to evolve to streamline collaboration and enable coordination with external stakeholders.

## New reimbursement model for the future of care

Karolinska University Hospital, in collaboration with World Health Organization Europe and the European Commission, is leading a project to develop a sustainable healthcare reimbursement model. The objective is to promote digital care and preventive interventions, enabling healthcare delivery to reach patients where needs arise—not solely within hospital settings.

The project aims to establish frameworks for reimbursing care delivered digitally or in patients' homes, including initiatives such as Karolinska University Hospital's home-based care solutions. The project aims to analyze current systems and propose solutions to optimize resource use and strengthen preventive care.



**3,653**

patients from other countries were treated in 2025 at Karolinska University Hospital, corresponding to 11,760 outpatient visits and 1,339 inpatient admissions.

Photo: Jens Dahlborg



## Accessibility is the foundation of patient confidence

Accessibility is fundamental to patient safety, confidence, and trust in the healthcare system. Through effective planning and optimization of hospital capacity, we ensure the greatest possible benefit for the largest number of patients. During 2025, several significant advancements were achieved. New clinical workflows were implemented, enabling patients to be assessed by a multidisciplinary triage team early upon arrival. At the same time, waiting times for patients transferred from the emergency department to inpatient wards were reduced.

Time to surgery also improved. By the end of 2025, 86 percent of patients underwent surgical procedures within 90 days, exceeding the regional target of 80 percent. Overall, a greater number of patients received care during the year, across both outpatient and inpatient settings. While the majority of patients were from the Stockholm region, care was also delivered to patients from other parts of Sweden and internationally.

**Måns Jungner,**  
Chief Production Officer



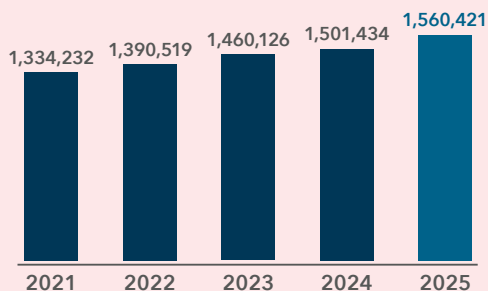
Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

*By the end of 2025, 86 percent of patients underwent surgery within 90 days, compared with the regional target of 80 percent.*

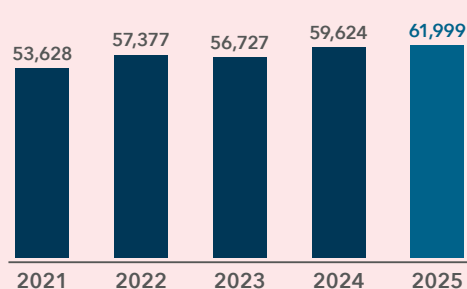
## 2025 in numbers



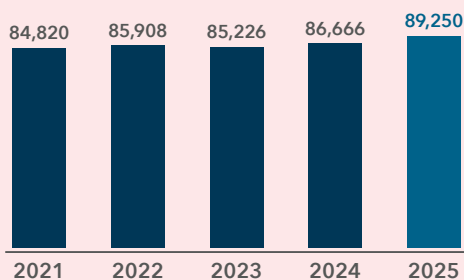
Number of outpatient visits



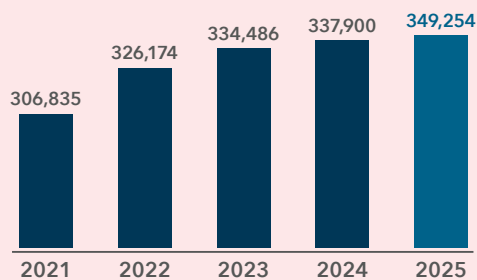
Number of operations



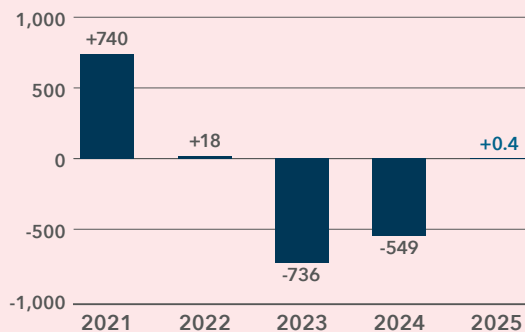
Number of inpatient episodes



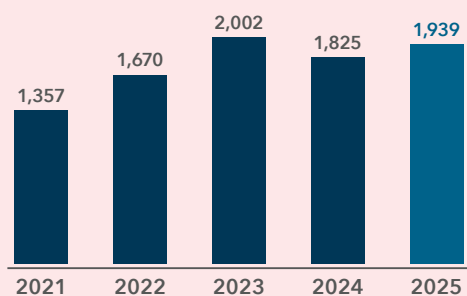
Number of patients



Net income 2021-2025  
(million SEK)



Income out-of-region and international  
patients (million SEK)





Karolinska University Hospital conducted a joint exercise with the 32nd Intelligence Battalion of the Swedish Armed Forces.

Photo: David Wollersjö/Försvarsmakten

# Karolinska University Hospital's societal responsibility

Karolinska University Hospital holds a broad responsibility for societal development, emergency preparedness, and long-term sustainability.

The hospital contributes to a resilient healthcare system through responsible resource use, financial stability, and a high level of preparedness for crises. Sustainability is integrated into governance and encompasses social, environmental, and economic dimensions, with a strong emphasis on equitable and gender-equal care delivery.

Examples of its societal contributions in 2025 include leading sustainability initiatives, strengthened emergency preparedness, responsibility for the region's blood supply, support to Ukraine during wartime, and knowledge exchange through national and international networks.

## Prepared for crises and disasters

Karolinska University Hospital maintains a high level of preparedness for both civilian crises and wartime scenarios. In recent years, the hospital has undertaken extensive efforts to enhance institutional resilience, including strengthening the reliability of facilities, digital infrastructure, and organizational structures in the event of disruptions.

Preparedness efforts intensified further in 2025, with continued development of continuity plans to ensure that operations can be sustained during extraordinary events. These scenarios include pandemics, large-scale trauma incidents such as aviation accidents and mass-casualty events, as well as armed conflict.

“Global conditions have been highly uncertain in recent years, and we must be prepared for all contingencies,” says Christina Granath, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at Karolinska University Hospital.

Preparedness activities are conducted at multiple organizational levels. A dedicated preparedness committee is responsible for overarching coordination, supported by a robust incident command structure activated during elevated alert levels. This structure is based on the NATO model, in which all participants have clearly defined roles. Regular exercises are conducted both internally and in collaboration with regional and national partners. In autumn 2025, a joint trauma care exercise was carried out with the Swedish Armed Forces.



## Increased blood donation

Approximately 100 liters of blood are used each day in healthcare in Stockholm. The majority is used in the treatment of cancer, chronic diseases and planned surgical procedures. As blood can only be stored for up to six weeks, continuous replenishment is essential.

The regional blood services are part of Karolinska University Hospital and include three donation centers in Stockholm and four mobile blood collection units. These mobile units visit approximately 100 locations across the region, often in close proximity to workplaces.

### Blood donation in the Stockholm region

	2024	2025
Number of blood donations	65,426	66,572
New blood donors	8,711	9,881
Active blood donors*	36,117	36,516

Source: the regional blood center.

\*An active blood donor is defined as an individual who has donated at least one unit of blood during the year.

## A strong partner in international networks

Karolinska University Hospital collaborates with healthcare providers both within Sweden and globally. These partnerships enable the exchange of knowledge and shared learning based on collective experience. In 2025, the hospital also contributed to the establishment of a national alliance among Sweden's university hospitals, aimed at strengthening collaboration at the national level.

### EUHA

The European University Hospital Alliance brings together leading European academic medical centers to promote innovation, quality, and sustainable healthcare systems across Europe. In 2025, Helsinki University Hospital joined the alliance, expanding its membership to eleven institutions.

As an established player at the European Union level, EUHA provides advisory input to policymakers on healthcare systems and the role of university hospitals. The EUCARE Fellowship Programme was hosted in Stockholm in 2025, and a joint communications network was established, coordinated by Karolinska University Hospital.

### NUHA

The Nordic University Hospital Alliance unites five leading Nordic university hospitals in close collaboration to address current and future healthcare challenges. Through joint initiatives in research, innovation, education, and patient care, NUHA facilitates the dissemination of knowledge, best practices, and the development of new solutions that enhance competencies, improve quality of care, and strengthen population health outcomes.

Key focus areas include rare diseases, clinical trials, benchmarking, and future models of care—creating a platform for cross-border collaboration, learning, and innovation.

### SUHA

The Swedish University Hospital Alliance was established in 2025, bringing together Sweden's seven university hospitals in a landmark collaboration to strengthen research, education, innovation, and future of healthcare delivery.

The alliance focuses on digitalization, artificial intelligence, clinical studies, education, and precision medicine, forming a unified platform to address major healthcare challenges.

"We take responsibility for the future of healthcare and ensure that both current and future patients have access to highly specialized care," says Christophe Pedroletti, CEO at Karolinska University Hospital.

*Together we take responsibility for the future of care and ensure that both today's and tomorrow's patients have access to highly specialized care.*

Christophe Pedroletti, CEO

## Continued support to Ukraine

Karolinska University Hospital extends its societal responsibility beyond Sweden's borders. In 2025, the hospital continued to support Ukraine through a range of initiatives.

27 patients from Ukraine received care at Karolinska University Hospital in 2025, including 15 oncology patients and 12 trauma patients. Since 2022, a total of 135 Ukrainian patients have been treated at the hospital.

In December 2025, Ukrainian healthcare professionals were welcomed for recovery and professional exchange with Swedish total defense stakeholders, including Karolinska University Hospital. This initiative was conducted with RePower Ukraine, which provides psychological rehabilitation programs for Ukrainian healthcare workers.

In addition, Ukrainian children were welcomed to Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital, where they were given a much-needed respite from the realities of war through play, creative activities, and social interaction.

Astrid Lindgren Children's Hospital has maintained a long-standing collaboration with Okhmatdyt Children's Hospital in Kyiv. During two fellowship programs in spring and autumn 2025, four fellows from Okhmatdyt engaged with clinical counterparts in their respective specialties at Karolinska University Hospital.

Karolinska University Hospital also participates in an international collaboration project coordinated with the World Health Organization office in Ukraine. The project focuses on strengthening and advancing the future of nursing practice, to develop modern standards of care and clearly defined professional roles aligned with European guidelines and best practices. The initiative supports a more standardized, professional, and sustainable development of the nursing profession.



*In 2025, 27 patients from Ukraine were treated at Karolinska University Hospital. In total, 135 patients have been treated since the war began.*

## 20 years of sustainability

Karolinska University Hospital has been environmentally certified in accordance with ISO 14001:2015 for 20 years. In 2025, sustainability efforts were further advanced across three key dimensions: social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

### Highlights from 2025



#### Honorable mention for sustainability efforts

In 2025, Karolinska received an honorable mention from the International Hospital Federation Awards for its sustainability initiatives. The award recognizes organizations that demonstrate outstanding contributions to social and environmental sustainability and achieve measurable impact through innovation in leadership, governance, health, equity, well-being, and environmental performance.



#### Circular protective aprons

In 2025, work commenced toward the goal that 50 percent of the hospital's protective aprons will be circular. Circular aprons generate 66 percent lower carbon emissions compared with conventional disposable aprons. Used aprons are collected separately and returned to the manufacturer for recycling into new products.



#### Energy efficiency campaign

During the year, an energy efficiency campaign was conducted in collaboration with the hospital's property owners to reduce energy consumption. The initiative resulted in an approximately five percent reduction in operational electricity use in April at the Solna site.



#### Educational films for equitable healthcare

During the year, the hospital increased awareness of all seven legally recognized grounds for discrimination through a series of informational films. The initiative aims to prevent discrimination and promote a more equitable healthcare system. The films, together with supporting discussion materials, will be incorporated into the hospital's mandatory sustainability training program in 2026.



#### Panel discussions during Pride

Pride was recognized at Karolinska through panel discussions featuring experts from healthcare and academia. Participants shared knowledge and experiences on how to advance equitable care and inclusive work environments for LGBTQI+ individuals.



#### Climate roadmap - pathway to 2035

In 2025, the hospital developed a roadmap identifying emission sources across operations and enabling prioritization of high-impact interventions. The roadmap supports alignment with Region Stockholm's goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2035.



John Söderberg, Medical Technology department, serves as Project Manager.

## Reusable accessories for patient monitoring

Monitoring vital parameters such as blood pressure, electrocardiography (ECG), and oxygen saturation currently requires approximately 135,000 single-use accessories each year at the hospital.

*22 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are reduced annually through reusable patient monitoring accessories.*

By transitioning from disposable to reusable patient monitoring accessories, combined with centralized ownership, the hospital expects significant annual reductions in both environmental impact and costs—approximately 22 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions and cost savings of SEK 9 million per year.



## Regional sustainability awards

Region Stockholm's sustainability awards recognize significant contributions in the field of sustainability.

In 2025, two of the four awards were presented to employees at Karolinska University Hospital. Susanne Fryklin was named "Employee of the Year" for her work on digital decluttering and reducing paper consumption. "The environmental award" was granted to a project focused on the reuse of patient monitoring accessories.



## An inspiring workplace to thrive in

Karolinska University Hospital is a workplace where employees can grow, regardless of profession or role. An organization with a wide range of professional disciplines creates a dynamic environment where ambition meets compassion.

A great workplace is shaped by the unique combination of professional development opportunities and an inspiring work environment. Employees have access to diverse career pathways in clinical care, research, education, and leadership, enabling them to shape their own professional trajectories. Many also contribute by mentoring and supervising future colleagues.

A trust-based leadership approach fosters collaboration and innovation, inspiring both present and future development. Karolinska University Hospital is an attractive and stimulating workplace where employees can grow, contribute, and take

pride in their mission. A strong physical, organizational, and psychosocial work environment is created through trust-based leadership, accountable employee engagement, and a culture characterized by openness, respect, and inclusion.

The hospital's core values—responsibility, compassion, and a holistic perspective—guide daily operations and place patient needs at the center. Through strong interprofessional collaboration, clearly defined development pathways, and close cooperation with labor unions, the organization creates conditions for engagement, continuous learning, and long-term sustainability.

## A shared foundation for employee engagement and leadership

In 2025, employee engagement and leadership were prioritized areas at Karolinska University Hospital. Efforts to strengthen a culture of openness have been ongoing since 2024 and have included dialogue and analysis across the organization. This work has been conducted jointly by the employer and labor union representatives within established collaboration structures.

In 2025, insights regarding needs and challenges were translated into a clear strategic direction for both leadership and employee engagement. Leadership and employee engagement are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Leadership that fosters psychological safety and development enables employees to realize their full potential, while active employee engagement provides leaders with the conditions to lead with clarity and confidence.



Photo: Malin Jochumsen

*Dialogue and analysis have resulted in a clear direction for leadership and employee engagement.*

### Employee engagement



Employee engagement reflects how all staff collectively contribute to the hospital's mission. It applies to all employees, regardless of role or profession, including leaders.

The foundation is the hospital's core values—**responsibility, compassion, and a holistic perspective**—which have been further operationalized during the year.

### Leadership



Leadership is critical to enabling effective employee engagement. It entails a distinct responsibility to provide direction, create enabling conditions, and support organizational development. During the year, focus was placed on defining and embedding a trust-based, visionary, and enabling leadership approach, as well as clarifying managerial accountability and role modeling as a foundation for continued development. This resulted in a framework to further develop leadership at the hospital.



## Sustainable workforce supply

Karolinska University Hospital works proactively to ensure long-term, sustainable workforce supply in order to achieve its objectives in healthcare delivery, research, and education. By attracting, retaining, and developing the right competencies, the hospital can meet both short- and long-term needs.

Workforce planning is a continuous process that includes analysis, planning, implementation, and follow-up to ensure the right competencies in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Within the regional budget framework, a number of performance indicators apply to all healthcare providers. Karolinska University Hospital met its targets for its sick leave rates, employee retention, and reduced exposure to workplace threats and violence—demonstrating the sustainability of employee engagement.

*By attracting, retaining, and developing the right competencies, the hospital can meet both short- and long-term needs.*



## Health-promoting workplace

Karolinska University Hospital is committed to being a health-promoting workplace. This includes comprehensive occupational health and safety efforts in collaboration with labor unions, as well as everyday initiatives that promote employee well-being.

*With 420 health ambassadors, the hospital works continuously to promote employee health and well-being.*

## Employee health and well-being

With 420 designated health ambassadors, the hospital continuously promotes employee health and well-being. These ambassadors play a key role as active advocates for health promotion, planning initiatives in collaboration with managers and colleagues, tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each unit. Through this approach, the hospital fosters a culture in which well-being, engagement, and a sustainable work environment are integral to daily operations. The ambition is for every unit to have at least one health ambassador contributing to job satisfaction, sustainability, and reduced absenteeism.

The annual Health Week—featuring workshops, lectures, and group training sessions—serves as an important source of inspiration for employees.



## Organizational work environment assessment

In the annual assessment of the organizational and social work environment, more than 1,000 additional respondents participated compared with 2024, resulting in a response rate of 77 percent. The assessment provides a current-state analysis of the work environment.

The high participation rate in 2025 reflects increased dialogue and openness within the organization. Results indicate that more employees perceive their management teams as being receptive to their views and suggestions.



## Flu vaccination for all employees

All employees were offered vaccination ahead of the 2025 flu season. The hospital's initiative was made possible by enterprising employees at Tema ARM (Acute and Reparative Medicine) and many employees took up the offer.

## Strengthening the role of nursing staff in innovation

Healthcare Frontline Innovation is an initiative led by Karolinska University Hospital aimed at strengthening the role of nursing professionals in innovation processes. The initiative is based on the principle "for care, by care," recognizing that the most effective solutions to healthcare challenges often come from those working closest to patients. By leveraging the experience and ideas of nurses and assistant nurses, solutions are developed that are grounded in real-world clinical needs.

*In the long term, we are building a culture where innovation is a natural part of care delivery.*

"Healthcare Frontline Innovation creates the conditions for innovation driven by nursing professionals. Together, we are building a more innovative and efficient care environment. We are establishing an idea management process that makes it easy to submit, follow up, and further develop ideas," says Nina Lahti, Project Manager.

"The goal is also to create more time for patients by improving processes and collaboration. In the long term, we are building a culture where innovation is a natural part of care delivery."

### Focus areas

#### The initiative focuses on:

- **Strengthening innovation** through training and workshops.
- **Establishing processes** that facilitate participation in innovation activities.
- **Promoting collaboration** between healthcare providers, academia, industry, and patients.



Photo: Josefine Franking

Karin Larsson, Specialist Assistant Nurse.

## Advanced training for assistant nurses

In total, five assistant nurses at Karolinska University Hospital now hold Level 5 positions. This clinical specialist role carries advanced responsibilities, including independently leading and developing patient care within a specific clinical area, mentoring colleagues, and actively participating in quality improvement and research initiatives.

*In total, five assistant nurses at Karolinska University Hospital hold Level 5 positions.*

## Annika celebrates 50 years at the hospital

Annika Ström, Radiology Nurse, is one of Karolinska University Hospital's jubilees in 2025. She began her career at the Solna campus in June 1974, transferred to the Neuroradiology Department in December 1975, and has been working there ever since.



Photo: Josefine Franking

Photo: Sara Dinwiddie



## Football festivities at the ALB Cup

Team spirit and a record number of participants marked the annual cup organized by Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital. The residents’ team claimed victory among ten competing teams from the hospital’s pediatric care units.

In total, 250 employees from different pediatric departments participated.



Photo: Ylva Hermansson



## Annual Lucia celebration

It has become a tradition to celebrate Lucia across the hospital. While classes from Adolf Fredrik Music School performed choral singing in the main entrance, hospital employees participated in Lucia festivities for the children at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital.



### SCAN!

See more of this year’s Lucia celebrations on Karolinska’s Instagram.

Photo: Josefine Franking



## Celebratory cake

At the beginning of the year, the hospital celebrated its ranking in Newsweek’s list of the world’s best hospitals with a cake event for all employees.



A workplace to thrive in  
för era insatser!

#karolinapriset

KAROLINSKA



Grattis och tack  
för era insatser!

#karolinapriset

KAROLINSKA



Photo: Jann Lipka

## Karolina Award 2025

The Karolina Award is the hospital's annual prize recognizing exemplary contributions by employees. Nominations are made by colleagues, highlighting outstanding dedication and achievements in their work.

### All winners of the Karolina Award 2025

Exemplary contribution to creating world-leading expertise: **Katri Manninen**

Exemplary research effort for patient benefit: **Erik Berninger**

Exemplary staff contribution to increased capacity and improved patient access: **Maria Eishoue**

Exemplary contribution to achieving the highest quality and patient safety: **Amanda Hasselborg and Stefan Lundmark**

Exemplary Staff contribution Astrid Lindgren's Children's Hospital: **Anna Sehgelmeble Torrejon**

Exemplary staff contribution Acute and Reparative Medicine: **Abdelhafiz Abakar**

Exemplary staff contribution Children Perioperative Medicine, Intensive Care, and Transport: **Lena Lampinen**

Exemplary staff contribution Cancer: **Tanja Wikholm**

Exemplary staff contribution Heart, Vascular & Neuro: **Alireza Daryapeyma**

Exemplary staff contribution Women's Health and Allied Health Professionals: **Petra Dahlgren**

Exemplary staff contribution Inflammation and Aging: **Shane Kroner and Marcelo Rojas Espinoza**

Exemplary staff contribution Inflammation and Aging: **Isabell Dillström Gustafsson**

Exemplary staff contribution Medical Diagnostics Karolinska: **Marie Sund**

Exemplary staff contribution Perioperative Medicine and Intensive Care: **Elin Osmo**

Exemplary staff contribution central staff units: **Maria Ouchterlony**

Exemplary leadership: **Linda Jervelius**



Photos: Jann Lipka

*I have always wanted to work with people*

Abdelhafiz Abakar, a nursing assistant, was recognized with the award “Exemplary Employee of the Theme of Acute and Reporative Medicine.” Abdelhafiz was visibly moved when receiving the award:

“The most meaningful is that I was nominated by my colleagues. I am surprised, but very proud. I have always wanted to work with people and aim to provide patients with the highest standard of care they deserve, while also empowering them to engage in activities they can perform themselves to improve their health and well-being.”

#### Excerpt from the citation:

*“For his outstanding commitment and exceptional contributions as a nursing assistant, colleague, and fellow human being. Through dedication, professionalism, and genuine compassion for both patients and colleagues, he exemplifies what world-class care represents. [...] He makes a meaningful difference every day, and he embodies the hospital’s core values: accountability, compassion, and a holistic perspective.”*

*It is an honor to receive the award*

Maria Ouchterlony, a systems administrator, received the award “Exemplary Employee within Central Administration.”

“It means a great deal to me. It is truly an honor, and it has moved me on several levels. Being nominated alone is both remarkable and an honor. It means that someone took the time to write a nomination and believes that what I do and how I contribute matters. I want to promote the message that going to work should be enjoyable—that employees should feel well and thrive in their workplace. It is essential that we see and support one another.”

#### Excerpt from the nomination:

*“There are individuals who make a difference—and there are those who are the difference. Maria is one such individual. With deep expertise, exceptional problem-solving ability, and an unwavering willingness to help, she is an invaluable part of our organization. Whether or not a matter formally falls within her responsibilities, she steps in and resolves it—not because she has to, but because she is committed to supporting colleagues, the organization, and ultimately those we serve.”*



# Awards 2025

## FEBRUARY

**Louisa Azizi**, Resident, received a scholarship from the Carl Tullus Memorial Fund.

## MARCH

**Gregory Palega** and **Anton Razuvajev**, both Consultants, were named Supervisors of the Year 2025 by the Residents, and the Vascular Surgery Unit in Solna was recognized as Best Residency Placement.

**Ammar Barakat**, Consultant, received the Guld-kornet award–SYLF Stockholm’s prize for excellence in supervision.

**Andri Papakonstantinou** was awarded the Pfizer and Swedish Society of Oncology (SOF) research grant in oncology for postdoctoral researchers.

## APRIL

**Hanna Sandberg** and **Rebecka Cederholm**, Registered Nurses, received the Britt-Marie Ygge Award for Best Master’s Thesis 2025.

## MAY

**Agneta Wikman**, Senior Consultant and Professor, was awarded the Royal Order of the Polar Star for “significant contributions as a transfusion medicine specialist within military healthcare.”

**Mikael Rydén**, Senior Consultant, became the first Swede to receive the international Camillo Golgi Prize, recognizing exceptional contributions to advancing knowledge in diabetes.

**Jakob Theorell**, Resident, was awarded Best Article in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) 2024 in the field of biomedical sciences.

**Feven Dawit**, neonatologist, received the honorary Prussiluskan Award 2024 for outstanding clinical supervision in pediatrics.

**Olle Söder**, Professor Emeritus, received the Andrea Prader Award.

**Sofia Dovborg**, Registered Nurse, was named Contact Nurse of the Year 2025 in the Stockholm-Gotland healthcare region.

## JUNE

**Charlotte Gran**, Senior Consultant, was named Employee of the Year by the Swedish Association for Clinical Chemistry.

**Fredrik Piehl**, Professor of Neurology and researcher at Karolinska University Hospital, was named Neurology Profile of the Year 2025 by the Swedish Neuro Association.

Researchers at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital received scholarships from the Swedish Childhood Cancer Research Foundation:

**AnnaMaria Tollne**, Assistant University Nurse;

**Oscar Berg**, Resident; **Karl Sallin**, Pediatric Neurologist and Associate Senior Consultant;

**Peter Eisenlauer**, Associate Senior Consultant;

**Niklas Gustafsson**, Consultant;

**Fredrik Sandesjö**, Pediatric Neurologist; **Julia**

**Starck**, Resident; **Gustaf Håkansson**, Pediatric Neurologist; **Ida Nordgren**, Resident; and

**Gandom Kharrazi**, Associate Senior Consultant.



Photo: Sara Friberg/Kungl. Hovstaterna



Photo: Karolinska



Photo: Olle Berg

**Susanne Fryklin**, Executive Assistant, was named Enthusiast of the Year in connection with Region Stockholm’s Sustainability Award.

**Felicia Hume**, Registered Nurse, received the DAISY Award 2025 for excellence in nursing care within the Theme of Cancer.

**Åsa Edsander-Nord**, Senior Consultant, was appointed Chair of EURAPS (European Association of Plastic Surgeons).

### JULY

**Bahira Shahim**, Consultant, was named one of the Future Research Leaders by the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research.

### SEPTEMBER

**Alexios Matikas**, Senior Consultant, was awarded the Swedish Society of Medicine Prize for Best Scientific Project Proposal 2025.

**Johan Wejde**, Senior Consultant in Clinical Pathology and Cytology, received the Hippocrates Prize 2025 from the Swedish Society of Medicine (SLS).

**The Medical Unit of Plastic and Maxillofacial Surgery** at Karolinska University Hospital was awarded the Continuing Professional Development Diploma by the Swedish Hospital Physicians Association.

### OCTOBER

**Mona Ståhle**, Senior Consultant and Professor, received the Hellerström Medal of the Year.

### NOVEMBER

**Emil Boström**, Consultant, and **Viktorija Matuleviciene Anängen**, Senior Consultant, formed the Swedish team “Team ROSC,” which won the European Championship in Advanced Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (ACPR).

**Balázs Ács**, Consultant, was awarded the ESMO Digital and Computational Pathology Fellowship.

**Anna Thor**, Senior Consultant, was awarded a research grant in urologic oncology.

**Cecilia Bartholdson**, Registered Nurse, and administrative officer at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital, received the scholarship Leader of the Year in Nursing 2025.

### DECEMBER

**Eva Karltopf**, Senior Consultant, was recognized with the Silver Ear Award by the Swedish Audiological Society.

**Agnes Linnér**, Senior Consultant at the Neonatal Unit, was named Lifesaver of the Year at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital.

**Peter Eisenlauer**, Associate Senior Consultant at the Neonatal Unit, was named Supervisor of the Year at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital.

**The Pediatric Oncology Unit** was named Section of the Year at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital.

The inaugural Olle Prize was presented to **Jonas Ekwall**, Associate Senior Consultant at Astrid Lindgren Children’s Hospital.



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

# Development and leadership for a better future

2025 was an eventful year at Karolinska University Hospital, marked by significant advances in clinical care, research, and education. The coming years are expected to be equally dynamic.

The hospital continues to drive progress toward the future of healthcare, working to make high-quality care more accessible. In a time of global uncertainty, Karolinska is upholding its societal responsibility by strengthening preparedness and striving for economic, environmental and social sustainability.

This requires a strong focus on creating a work environment that inspires. Looking ahead to 2026, the hospital remains committed to these objectives. Presented below are three forward-looking perspectives from key leadership functions at the hospital: the HR Director, the Director of Research & Development, Education and Innovation, and the Chief Medical Officer.

# A great workplace— today and in the future

Karolinska University Hospital is a diverse and dynamic workplace. 16,500 dedicated and highly skilled employees work side by side for the benefit of patients today and in the future. Our differences are our strength, driving new ways of thinking, innovation, and development. Not only within our areas of responsibility, but also for our patients, the region, and for health-care, research, and education worldwide.

## *I am proud of how our employees shape the culture at the hospital.*

I am proud of how our employees shape the culture at Karolinska. They embody our core values through accountability, compassion, and a holistic perspective. The strong commitment to continuously developing and improving the hospital's ways of working is evident every day and represents a key strength for the future. It is our employees' ability to meet each patient's unique healthcare needs with respect and empathy that enables outstanding performance and delivers care that saves and improves lives every hour, every day, throughout the year.

Leadership at Karolinska University Hospital is grounded in trust, guided by vision, and focused on enabling others—creating the best possible conditions for collaboration and high-quality care. It is leadership that is both present and development-oriented, one that inspires today while building for the future.

We are entering an exciting phase of development in the interaction between people and technology. How can we fully harness the opportunities presented by digitalization and advances in artificial intelligence? While our employees will always remain the hospital's most important resource, we are also advancing digital transformation and leveraging AI solutions to work more efficiently, freeing up time for patient interactions and improving the work environment.

Within a university hospital, employees are offered a wide range of career pathways across clinical care, research, education, and leadership. Opportunities for growth across different fields and roles foster lifelong learning—an approach that is integral to Karolinska's identity and distinguishes us as one of the world's leading hospitals, today and in the future.

**Lena Hadad,**  
HR Director



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

# New steps in a long history of medical breakthroughs

I am proud of Karolinska University Hospital's position as one of the world's leading hospitals. Together with Karolinska Institutet, we form one of the strongest research environments globally. A long line of medical breakthroughs—such as the pacemaker, the Gamma Knife, and heart valve prostheses—attests to this. To maintain our position in an era of widespread digitalization and artificial intelligence, with enormous potential to advance and streamline healthcare, we face new and significant developmental steps.

*We drive progress in advanced therapy medicinal products, digitalization, and AI.*

We are driving progress in advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs), digitalization, and artificial intelligence, which demands that we allocate resources effectively to achieve the greatest possible benefit. We need appropriate technical infrastructure, structured health data, specialized competence, and a supportive framework to transform ideas into implemented solutions. A key factor in our success with ATMPs is our production facility in Flemingsberg, the Karolinska Center for Cell Therapy. We have long been a leader in Europe, and with new therapy areas emerging, a more modern and flexible facility is required. Achieving this requires close collaboration within the hospital, as well as with the university and the life science industry.

Karolinska University Hospital has distinguished itself in data-driven management and governance. Our research has relied on secondary use of health data. To further strengthen our position, we are now building a new data platform to improve system integration across data sources, providing more efficient access to health data for both primary and secondary use.

To lead both development and implementation of AI, we are ensuring that the hospital has the right competence and capabilities. The rapid pace of innovation requires new expertise in IT, law, procurement, and project management. We are building an innovation-oriented organizational structure with key roles that drive progress and strengthen support for innovators. Commercializing medical inventions is the most effective way to make them available to patients worldwide.

Karolinska faces an exciting future, and I look forward to continuing this remarkable journey as we shape the healthcare of tomorrow.

**Olof Akre,**  
Director of  
Research &  
Development,  
Education and  
Innovation



Photo: Fredric Möller Eklund

# Patient involvement is the key to the future of patient safety

Patient safety efforts have traditionally focused on internal processes, routines, and methods. I believe that the most significant improvements in the coming years will concern the softer aspects of patient safety, such as interpersonal interactions and communication. By involving patient representatives in our strategic work and emphasizing person-centered care, we have created a healthcare environment where patients' experiences directly contribute to increased safety. When patients actively participate and share their experiences, we can better tailor care to their needs and expectations. This collaboration between healthcare staff and patients is essential for building a safe care environment.

Data from Patient-Reported Experience Measures show that patient involvement also enhances safety, as it allows us to identify and address potential risks at an early stage. Cases reported to the regional patient advisory board often concern deficiencies in communication and interpersonal interactions. We know that communication can suffer in acute situations, and this is an area that can be improved with relatively simple measures.

To strengthen our person-centered approach, we now track the number of such cases per unit and review them quarterly. One example of innovative development is the pediatric emergency department's digital self-registration system. Patients or guardians can specify the reason for seeking care using predefined questions. This enables staff evaluating and prioritizing

patient needs to have a clearer overview of the patient categories present in the waiting area. This approach has increased patient safety for pediatric emergency visitors and improved staff working conditions, as priorities can be managed directly from the waiting list.

## *World-class healthcare requires world-class patient safety.*

The key to safe and person-centered care remains a robust patient safety organization that manages incidents and risks at all levels of the hospital. This provides a strong foundation for a preventive approach. It is gratifying to see how these structures allow us to act before problems arise, as demonstrated in our patient safety dialogues with Theme and Function leadership teams.

At Karolinska University Hospital, patient safety is always a top priority. World-class healthcare also requires world-class patient safety. I look forward to continuing this vital work together with our dedicated employees and engaged patients.

**Ylva Pernow,**  
Chief Medical  
Officer



Photo: Fredric Møller Eklund

World-class care, research, and education  
–and an inspiring workplace to thrive in.

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