

German air force transfers patients as clinics fill up

November 26 2021



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Germany on Friday used a military plane to transfer intensive care patients to less afflicted regions, an unprecedented move as a vicious fourth wave of the pandemic fills hospital wards.

A specially equipped Airbus 310 medical transport plane took off from Memmingen in the hard-hit state of Bavaria headed for

Muenster/Osnabrueck airport in the west of the country, a German air force spokesman said.

Using an emergency plan devised earlier in the pandemic, patients in overstretched intensive care units are being moved to clinics that still have capacity for critically ill people.

A ferocious fourth wave of COVID-19 has in particular ravaged the south and southeast of the EU's most populous country.

"The situation is dramatically serious—more serious than at any other point in this pandemic," Health Minister Jens Spahn told reporters Friday, as he called on regional and [local authorities](#) under Germany's federalist system to tighten shutdown measures.

The transport [plane](#) has six intensive care beds, which a defence ministry spokesman said would all be filled on the first flight, with further planes on stand-by.

Germany this week passed the grim milestone of 100,000 deaths from coronavirus since the beginning of the outbreak, as daily infections continue to shatter records.

The Robert Koch Institute infectious disease centre on Friday reported 76,414 cases in 24 hours while the seven-day incidence per 100,000 people reached 438.2—both setting new highs.

As the situation worsens, Spahn and other officials are calling for the next crisis meeting between federal and state leaders set for December 9 to be moved forward to approve new measures.

Outgoing chancellor Angela Merkel, who is expected to hand over the reins to a new government early next month, warned Thursday that

"every day counts" as she urged "more contact restrictions" to fight the virus.

© 2021 AFP

Citation: German air force transfers patients as clinics fill up (2021, November 26) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-german-air-patients-clinics.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.