



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## PINK FOUNDATION LAUNCHES INNOVAID TEENAGE HEALTHCARE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

**Sofia, Bulgaria** - 22 November 2022 - The PINK Foundation announced today the launch of InnovAid, a new healthcare volunteer program for Bulgarian teenagers. In return for volunteer service in local healthcare institutions, participating teenagers receive practical training, hands-on experience, and useful guidance as they explore careers in the healthcare sector.

"The overarching purpose of InnovAid is to provide a useful on-ramp for teenagers into healthcare environments," said Bob Faber, Executive Director of the Pink Foundation, adding, "With the hope that exposure might inspire some of them to pursue healthcare training and careers."

Hospitals and healthcare professionals also gain from working with InnovAid. Hospitals receive eager volunteers to help them with tasks for which they might not have staff to support otherwise, and healthcare professionals get a break from some of the non-medical issues that crop up day to day to free their valuable time in service of direct patient relationships and overall better care.

The development of InnovAid takes place against the backdrop of growing demand for healthcare workers worldwide and a looming workforce shortage in the Bulgarian healthcare sector. Currently, over 40% of Bulgarian doctors and 45% of nurses are over age 55. Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge, World Health Organization Regional Director for Europe, calls the current healthcare workforce situation "a ticking timebomb which, if not addressed, is likely to lead to poor health outcomes across the board."<sup>1</sup>

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### Footnotes:

1. WHO Regional Office for Europe (2022, September 22). Ticking timebomb: Without immediate action, health and care workforce gaps in the European Region could spell disaster. World Health Organization. Retrieved November 22, 2022, from <https://www.who.int/>

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**About The Pink Foundation:** Pink Foundation is a Bulgarian registered public benefit charity established in 2012. It operates multi-faceted enrichment programs for children built around five core disciplines: socialization, education, health and hygiene, life skills, and community service.