

Paris, July 24, 2009



United Kingdom: Air Liquide confirms its ambitions in Healthcare market

press release

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Air Liquide's Healthcare Business

Air Liquide's Healthcare World Business Line serves over **6,000 hospitals** and **300,000 patients** throughout the world.

It provides **gases, hygiene products and medical equipment** to its hospital customers and **homecare** to patients in cities.

The Group's Healthcare business made **€ 1,700 million** in revenues in 2008, **63% outside France** with **7,800 employees**.

Homecare

Air Liquide, **leader of the European homecare market**, provides prescription care for patients diagnosed with **chronic illnesses** such as **COPD** (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and **sleep apnea**. These homecare treatments are being developed in addition to hospital care, enabling patients to enjoy **better quality of life and local authorities to reduce costs**.

Homecare represents **42% of Air Liquide's total 2008 Healthcare business**.

Air Liquide, which was already, for some years, a supplier of medical hygiene products in the British market, entered the **British homecare and medical gases** markets in **2007**, with the acquisition of **Linde UK and Allied Respiratory**.

Air Liquide increased its presence in United Kingdom **by being selected by the National Health Service** (or "NHS", the British public health system) **to serve, from February 1st, 2009, 10,000 patients in the South West of England. These patients now receive oxygen therapy and associated services** thanks to two new agencies opened in Bristol and Plymouth.

In doing so, Air Liquide has consolidated its position as the **number two player in the UK homecare market**, with around **30,000 patients** and **300 employees**.

To increase the **quality and efficiency** of its services, **Air Liquide will bring together, from August 1st, 2009, all its homecare human resources and assets** in England within a single company: "**Air Liquide Home Care Ltd**". Through this new company, Air Liquide will be able to bring to the NHS **all the know-how developed by the Group's homecare business**.

Jean-Marc de Royere, Vice-President of the Group's Healthcare business and member of Air Liquide's Executive Committee, declared: "***We confirm the strong growth outlook announced in 2007, as we entered the British market. We want to continue to develop new services with the NHS, to increase the quality of life of people with respiratory diseases in the United Kingdom. Health is a solid and lasting growth driver for the Air Liquide Group.***"

Air Liquide is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in over **75 countries** with **43,000 employees**. Oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and rare gases have been at the core of Air Liquide's activities since its creation in 1902. Using these molecules, Air Liquide continuously reinvents its business, anticipating the needs of current and future markets. The Group innovates to enable progress, to achieve dynamic growth and a consistent performance.

Air Liquide combines many products and technologies to develop valuable applications and services not only for its customers but also for society. **Innovative technologies** that curb polluting emissions, lower industry's energy use, recover and reuse natural resources or develop the energies of tomorrow, such as hydrogen, biofuels or photovoltaic energy... Oxygen for hospitals, homecare, fighting nosocomial infections...

A partner for the long term, Air Liquide relies on employee commitment, customer trust and shareholder support to pursue its vision of sustainable, competitive growth. The **diversity** of Air Liquide's teams, businesses, markets and geographic presence provides a solid and sustainable base for its development and strengthens its ability to push back its own limits, conquer new territories and build its future.

Air Liquide explores the best that air can offer to preserve life, staying true to its sustainable development approach. In 2008, the Group's revenues amounted to **€13.1 billion**, of which almost 80% were earned outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.