

Messi donates half a million euros to help Argentinian hospitals deal with coronavirus pandemic

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Footballer Lionel Messi has donated €500,000 (\$540,000/£447,000) to help hospitals in his native Argentina as they deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

Casa Garrahan, a health foundation based in Buenos Aires says the donation will be used to buy protective equipment for health professionals, as reported by *Xinhuanet*.

"We are very grateful for this recognition of our workforce, allowing us to continue our commitment to Argentinian public health," Casa Garrahan executive director Silvia Kassab said in a statement.

The Barcelona striker's gesture will allow the foundation to purchase respirators, infusion pumps and computers for hospitals in the Santa Fe and Buenos Aires provinces, as well as the autonomous city of Buenos Aires.



Protective equipment will be purchased for health professionals at Argentinian hospitals thanks to Lionel Messi's donation ©Getty Images

Meanwhile, high-frequency ventilation equipment and other protective gear is set to be delivered to Argentinian hospitals soon.

Messi, who earlier this year shared the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award with Lewis Hamilton, last month reduced his Barcelona salary by 70 per cent, along with his teammates, to support club staff during football's shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

In Argentina there have been more than 7,800 cases of coronavirus, resulting in more than 350 deaths.

Globally, there have been more than 4.78 million cases, with more than 315,000 fatalities.