



2 March 2018

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Supply chain commitment to tackling problem of medicine shortages

The European associations representing manufacturers of medicinal products, parallel distributors, healthcare distributors and pharmacists welcome pan-European efforts by the Heads of Medicine Agencies¹, the European Medicines Agency, the Council² and the European Commission³ to address medicine shortages. **Supply chain stakeholders believe that the long-term resolution of medicines shortages is dependent upon collaborative and unified actions. We therefore call for the inclusion of the supply chain actors in the abovementioned initiatives organized by Governments and the regulatory community.**

Ahead of the Bulgarian Presidency event 'Health as the Real Winner: Presidency conference on options to provide better medicines for all' on 6 March in Sofia, supply chain stakeholders call for their greater involvement in discussions about medicines shortages. Specifically, supply chain stakeholders wish to make the Health Ministers aware of an existing collaboration on this crucial issue, created with the objective of helping to mitigate the impact of shortages. Furthermore, supply chain stakeholders strongly believe that the input, perspectives and experience of the variety of stakeholders affected by the issue of shortages needs to be sought and taken on board to reach best-informed conclusions.

The supply chain partners have set up an informal working group in 2015 and published a set of recommendations in early 2017⁴ calling for greater transparency and availability of medicines shortage data, early detection and assessment of potential shortages, consistency

¹ HMA/EMA Task Force on Availability of authorised medicines for human and veterinary use (TF AAM)
<http://www.hma.eu/522.html>

² Health as the Real Winner: Presidency conference on options to provide better medicines for all
<https://eu2018bg.bg/en/events/283>

³ Commission Expert Group on Safe and Timely Access to Medicines for Patients ("STAMP")
https://ec.europa.eu/health/documents/pharmaceutical-committee/stamp_en

⁴ <http://www.pgeu.eu/en/policy/20:medicine-shortages.html>

of reporting, increased access to the information available across all parts of the supply chain, improved data infrastructure, and collaborative stakeholder governance processes.

The Associations' statement⁴ is part of their wider commitment to tackling the increasing problem of shortages across the European Union, having a significant impact on patients, health professionals, healthcare systems and manufacturers and distributors.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The recommendations in [full](#) can be accessed here.
2. The recommendations have been developed and agreed by the following organisations:
 - **The Association of the European Self-Medication Industry (AESGP)** is the official representation of manufacturers of non-prescription medicines, food supplements and self-care medical devices in Europe. AESGP was founded in 1964 to contribute to the improvement of responsible self-medication at the European level and to ensure that the value of responsible self-care is recognised in pharmaceutical, food and health matters. <http://www.aesgp.eu/>
 - **The European Association of Euro-Pharmaceutical Companies (EAEP)** is the representative voice of pharmaceutical parallel distribution in Europe. Through national association or individual company membership it encompasses more than 100 companies from 23 countries in the European Economic Area (EEA). The EAEP's primary aims are to safeguard the free movement of medicines, as laid down in the EU treaty, and to counteract any attempts to restrict the freedom of choice for the consumer through trading patterns in breach of European competition law. The Association believes that free trade will lead to improvements in health standards through the provision of innovative medicines at lower cost, benefiting statutory healthcare systems, other third-party payers, and the public as both patients and taxpayers, as well as assisting the EU to achieve its objective of a single, internal market. More information www.eaepc.org
 - **The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP)** represents c. 21,000 hospital pharmacists across 35 European countries. More information about its activities in respect to medicines shortages is available at <http://www.eahp.eu/practice-and-policy/medicines-shortages>
 - **The European Industrial Pharmacists Group (EIPG)** is a European association representing the national, professional organizations of pharmacists employed in the pharmaceutical or allied industries of the Member States of the European Union, the European Economic Area, or European countries having a mutual recognition agreement with the European Union on compliance control of regulated medicines. <https://eipg.eu/>
 - **The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)** represents the pharmaceutical industry operating in Europe. EFPIA is the voice on the EU scene of 1,900 companies committed to researching, developing and bringing to patients' new medicines that will improve health and the quality of life around the world. <https://www.efpia.eu/>
 - **The European Healthcare Distribution Association (GIRP)** is the umbrella organisation for pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers and distributors of healthcare products and services in Europe. It represents the national associations of over 750 pharmaceutical wholesalers serving 32 European countries, as well as major international and pan-European healthcare distribution companies. GIRP members employ over 140,000 people and distribute around 15 billion packs of medicines as well as a wide range of healthcare products per year. As the vital link in healthcare, they are committed to developing and providing innovative and efficient healthcare products and services to improve health and wellbeing of patients across Europe. <http://www.girp.eu/>
 - **Medicines for Europe** represents the generic, biosimilar and value-added medicines industries across Europe. Its vision is to provide sustainable access to high quality medicines, based on 5 important pillars: patients, quality, value, sustainability and partnership. Its members employ 160,000 people at over 350 manufacturing and R&D sites in Europe and invest up to 17% of their turnover in medical innovation. Medicines for Europe member companies across Europe are both increasing access to medicines and driving improved health outcomes. They play a key role in creating sustainable European healthcare systems by continuing to provide high quality, effective generic medicines, whilst also innovating to create new biosimilar medicines and bringing to market value added medicines, which deliver better

health outcomes, greater efficiency and/or improved safety in the hospital setting for patients. For more information please follow us at www.medicinesforeurope.com and on Twitter @medicinesforEU.

- **The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)** is the association representing community pharmacists in 32 European countries. In Europe over 400.000 community pharmacists provide services through a network of more than 160.000 pharmacies, to an estimated 46 million European citizens daily. PGEU's objective is to promote the role of pharmacists as key players in healthcare systems throughout Europe and to ensure that the views of the pharmacy profession are taken into account in the EU decision-making process. For more information please visit the PGEU website www.pharmacy.eu

3. For more information please contact: pharmacy@pgeu.eu