

Medicines shortages: root causes and potential solutions

Medicines shortages are a significant cause of concern for patients, clinicians and our public health. They impact on patients' health outcomes by causing delays in treatment or forcing changes in treatment regimes as well as inducing a great deal of stress and worry to patients and their families.

The European associations representing manufacturers of vaccines and medicines, parallel distributors, pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers and industrial pharmacists are committed to working with the EU and member states to progress short term and longer term solutions addressing the root causes of medicines shortages that occur across Europe.

The root causes of medicines shortages include manufacturing, quality, economic, and supply chain issues. Our associations are committed to stepping up efforts to prevent and to mitigate medicines shortages. As a group, we believe that the root causes of shortages can be addressed by a set of short term and longer term solutions including harmonising data and monitoring medicines shortages at EU level, creating regulatory incentives for essential low-priced medicines, allowing regulatory flexibility and improved regulatory efficiency to mitigate shortages, and ensuring market stability and sustainability.

We call for a dialogue with EU and national competent authorities in order to implement solutions effectively addressing the root causes of shortages in the short, medium and long term perspectives rather than placing short term disproportionate requirements on manufacturers and supply chain stakeholders that could have opposite effects to the ones intended.

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Notes to Editors

1. The joint paper on addressing the root causes of medicines shortages in full can be accessed [here](#).
2. The joint paper has 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.
 - **The European Association of Euro-Pharmaceutical Companies (EAEPC)** represents Europe's licensed parallel distribution industry, an integral part of the European pharmaceutical market that adds value to society by introducing price competition and a supplementary layer of safety for medicines. We represent 125 companies in 23 EU/EEA Member States. These members account for approximately 85% of the total parallel import market volume in the EU/EEA.



- **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.
- **The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)** represents the pharmaceutical industry operating in Europe. Through its direct membership of 36 national associations and 39 leading pharmaceutical companies, EFPIA's mission is to create a collaborative environment that enables our members to innovate, discover, develop and deliver new therapies and vaccines for people across Europe, as well as contribute to the European economy. Our vision is for a healthier future for Europe. A future based on prevention, innovation, access to new treatments and better outcomes for patients.
- **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 34 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.
- **Medicines for Europe** (formerly EGA) 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.
- **Vaccines Europe (VE)**, is a specialised vaccines group within the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations. Formed in 1991, Vaccines Europe represents major innovative research-based vaccine companies as well as small and medium sized enterprises operating in Europe which account for a large share of human vaccines used worldwide. Companies represented within Vaccines Europe are involved in research and development (R&D), clinical trials, production and marketing of vaccines and are dedicated to improving public health through immunisation.