Digital transformation of healthcare

→ **Call for action: acceleration of digital healthcare implementation across all EU countries to reduce burdens on medical systems during COVID-19 crisis**

In the recent days due to the COVID-2019 pandemic we observe dramatic challenges to healthcare systems in several EU member states. This escalating situation leads to strong restrictive measures undertaken by individual Governments and European Commission.

Among the measures that Governments and regulators are putting in place, Medicines for Europe would like to point **the attention of the regulators to the key supportive role that the digitalisation of health system can play in this emergency situation. Medicines for Europe believes that is of utmost importance of the acceleration of implementation digital health solutions** currently and for the future of European patients and healthcare systems.

Digital technologies now play a key role in the economy and many people's everyday lives. They have the potential to transform health and care by changing the way people engage with medical professionals and services improving efficiency and coordination of care, sharing of data and information and supporting people to manage their own health and wellbeing. This is already being illustrated through the growing use of self-care apps on smartphones, wearable sensors to monitor conditions or physical activity, online health information, digital access channels in primary care, and the development of electronic health records.

Medicines for Europe believes that digital solutions can support by avoiding further infection diffusion while the system continue to work as well as monitoring supply and stocks to allow the industry to fast react to ensure patient access to medicines:

MEASURES TO LIMIT FURTHER SPREAD OF COVID19

e-Solutions to avoid diffusion of infections while the system continue to work.
New technologies are being used to variant extent - in the national healthcare systems - to provide effective platforms for functioning of **e-Solutions** to avoid diffusion of infections while the system continue to work. In vis-à-vis epidemic restrictions (for example self-isolation), electronic prescription and electronic access to leaflet and internet sale of medicines – once authorised by regulators - can provide an option to traditional supply to patients. Like:

∗ **e-Prescription**
Dematerialisation of medical prescriptions, without the need to physically collect, and bring the paper reminder to the pharmacy, will avoid long term prescriptions that in such emergency situation could contribute to limit the movement of citizens and stop the infection.
In this emergency situation a good complement would be to encourage home delivery of medicines.

∗ **e-Referral**

∗ **e-Consultation (tele-medicine) to optimize the use of medical resources**.

MEASURES TO MOVE MEDICINES FASTER IN EUROPE

∗ **Access to product information:**
  o Phase I - *during the crisis*: **e-Leaflet and** flexibility on language/ leaflet/ packaging
  To ship products faster between countries exemption to the need to repackage and with option to publish the package leaflet electronically on companies or regulators websites.
  o Phase II – *post crisis*: **Electronic product information (ePI) –** prioritise implementation of ePI in Europe.

* **Submission of new dossiers and variations only via digital tools:** speed up regulatory approvals and administrative variations allowing submission only via digital tools to counterbalance capacity constraints in Regulatory departments.

During recent weeks we observe increased use of e-solutions whenever these have been implemented and they effectively decrease the burden on healthcare services. All of above has a strategic importance at the country level as well as at EU level when it comes to general cross continent health threat like current pandemic state. To promote the use of eSolutions is crucial to ensure equitable and sustainable access to medicines and medical equipment during the current crisis. Therefore, **Regulators and industry needs to collaborate and be supported in the use of digital solution to serve patients 'need at the best**.