

A statement from the President on COVID-19

As President of Medicines for Europe, and someone who is directly involved in medicine production and supply I want to be clear on the urgency surrounding Medicines for Europe's main objective – to ensure supply and availability of medicines during this unprecedented public health crisis. Our industry looks at this in a number of different ways.

First, we need to keep manufacturing and supplying all the medicines that patients rely on every day. Chronic and life-threatening conditions remain a way of life for many during this difficult time. The ongoing supply of almost 70% of prescription medicines that our members provide across Europe is crucial to help support healthcare systems as they battle against COVID-19. We also need to ensure we are producing all the medicines that are in high demand to support directly in the fight against COVID-19.

I would like therefore to sincerely echo, on behalf of all the members of Medicines for Europe, the [vibrant call](#) launched by the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to ensure that patients have access to the medicines they need during this public health crisis and salute the European Commission Guidance on supply and availability of medicines to Member States adopted on April 8th.

Since the virus was first identified in China, our members have been implementing pre-prepared Business Continuity Plans, which are designed to ensure continued supply to patients and healthcare professionals even during a crisis, while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of employees. To ensure supply, day and night Medicines for Europe members are continuously assessing portfolios, forecasts and supply to best meet the increasing demands posed by COVID19.

We have developed guidelines to ensure supply continuity and we are working closely with the European Commission, national governments, competent authorities and policy makers so that we do all we can to maintain the development, production, supply and distribution of high-quality medicines during the pandemic.

As of today, our supply remains largely uninterrupted despite the constraints that we face.

As the pandemic progresses in Europe, we are experiencing bottle necks and unprecedented demand surges, which need to be addressed. To keep medicines moving, it is fundamental that borders are kept open and that no artificial market supply disruptions such as stockpiling, or hoarding are created. This is imperative to ensure medicines continue to get from factory to hospital where they are urgently needed.

We welcome the efforts made by the European Commission to facilitate the supply of essential medicines through the issuing of guidelines for border crossing 'green lanes', air cargo and for the pharmaceutical manufacturing workforce. These initiatives are crucial for our industry to be able to keep medicines production going and to keep medicines moving to those who need it.

The publication of the EU Guidance on Optimisation of Supply of Medicines for COVID-19 highlights a series of recommendations to enable fair and equitable access to COVID-19 treatments. Another key and very much welcome guidance from the European Commission which should be implemented at national level.

All this guidance demonstrates the power of working together, industry, policy makers, regulators in the best interest of the patients and the healthcare professionals that we serve.

This partnership is essential and should integrate the local and European level as it is the only way to ensure equitable access to medicines across Europe. This crisis is unprecedented, testing our capacity to join forces and show solidarity: a fundamental value of the European Union. The role of the European Commission is therefore central in ensuring this coordination with all concerned stakeholders and we are recognisant to all pragmatic efforts made in that direction.

Therefore, on behalf of Medicines for Europe, I would like to thank the President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen, Commissioner Kyriakides and Commissioner Breton for their active engagement. Even if we are not out of the pandemic yet, I strongly believe that together we are stronger.

I would like also to take this opportunity to thank all healthcare professionals, which every day are facing the virus on the front lines. All of us at Medicines for Europe sincerely thank you for everything you do. Your resilience is our daily inspiration and unites us in our efforts to work around the clock to deliver the treatments that patients need.

Christoph Stoller (Teva), President, Medicines for Europe

STRONGER TOGETHER IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST COVID19

Medicines for Europe

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 directly employ 190,000 people at over 400 manufacturing and 126 R&D sites in Europe and invest up to 17% of their turnover in R&D investment. 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.