

Medicines for Europe statement: Supply of essential Intensive Care Unit (ICU) medicines

April 2020

Our members represent 67% of all dispensed medicines supplied in Europe coming from 400 factories working day and night. We are responding at maximum capacity to the challenges posed by the COVID19 outbreak in Europe. One of our priorities is ensuring the secure, continuous supply of medicines (essential and ICU) to hospitals and healthcare professionals, to support their efforts caring for patients.

Medicines for Europe members are manufacturing essential ICU medicines at full capacity 24/7, where possible, to ensure adequate supply and equitable country distribution (needs vary by country size, scale of the outbreak, number of ICU admissions, and other considerations).

The rising demand of ICU medicines deserves particular EU-wide efforts. ICU medicines of critical importance to maintain patients on ventilator machines include sedatives, muscle relaxants, antibiotics and/or anaesthetics, among others. The medicines and machines must both be available to help patients with respiratory difficulties.

Medicines for Europe would like to underline the call by the [European University Hospital Alliance](#) for more European collaboration to prevent drug shortages and is therefore emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts to ensure effective response to the increased demand for ICU medicines, which are pivotal for COVID19 patient care.

Our call to action

We are calling for close coordination between the European Medicines Agency member states and our industry, to support an equitable allocation of our members production output of critical ICU medicines and facilitate supply chains by keeping borders open and avoiding artificial stockpiling at a national level. This is needed so that together we work in the best interest of European patients and healthcare professionals.

How our industry is responding to COVID19

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 our members are continuously assessing portfolios, forecast and supply to best meet the increasing demands posed by COVID19. As of today, our supply remains largely uninterrupted, however as the pandemic progresses in Europe, we are experiencing bottle necks and demand surges, which need to be addressed.

We are working closely with government and policy makers both at EU and national level so that we do all we can to maintain the development, production, supply and distribution of high-quality medicines during the pandemic. This requires borders to be kept open and that no artificial market supply disruptions are created. We recognise the efforts made by the European Commission to facilitate the supply of essential medicines through the issuing of guidelines for border crossing green lanes, 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 most.

For more information on the work of Medicines for Europe on COVID19, visit www.medicinesforeurope.com

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.