



# Filling the gap

How off-patent medicines can **improve the equity and quality** of cancer care

## RECOMMENDATIONS to address equity in access and quality of cancer care:



### Finding synergies and sharing best practices

**Access to oncology treatment and care** across Europe is not equitable – among countries, and even across regions and hospitals within countries. More action is needed to find **synergies and to share best practices for countries to achieve equitable access to cancer care.**



### Comprehensive uptake policies

**Comprehensive policies which support the uptake of generic and biosimilar medicines** are required to broaden patient access to oncology therapies. **Incentives and utilisation support measures** would allow reliable supply as well as efficiency gains for pharmaceutical budgets, **greater access and care equity, and more patients to be treated.**



### EU and National cancer strategies promoting the use of off-patent medicines

**EU and National cancer strategies should actively promote the use of off-patent medicines and redeploy the freed up budget.** Reinvestment would improve the quality of cancer care by involving all actors in the benefit sharing.



### Removing barriers after expiry of Intellectual Property (IP)

**The removal of access restrictions and anti-competitive marketing strategies after expiry of Intellectual Property (IP) and other protections** is essential to leverage the opportunity with off-patent oncology treatment.



### Adapting EU the framework to develop Value Added Medicines

For a more **holistic and patient-centred approach** towards disease prevention and treatment, value added medicines development should be supported by **adapting the EU framework to better support innovation in off-patent medicines by repurposing, reformulating or combining therapies to optimise oncology treatments.**



## Biosimilar medicines

- A growing number of new cancer therapies are biological molecules.
- In 2020, it was estimated that 3 molecules used to treat cancer accounted for 15% of all cancer medicine sales and that the biosimilar options could bring a cost reduction of EUR 2.4 billion in Europe per year<sup>1</sup>.
- Existing **biosimilar competition** in cancer care has created **opportunities for re-investment of savings** into other cancer care products or services. Robust policies should promote their uptake.



## value added medicines

- **Continuous innovation in off-patent medicines** is needed to improve treatments for larger patient populations with chronic and non-communicable diseases, such as cancer.
- The **repurposing of existing medicines** delivers on **unmet medical need** at a sustainable cost for healthcare systems.
- Transition to **patient-centric care models** (such as home care) will need to be supported by changes in the **delivery of medicines** to enable new care models.



## Generic medicines

- The **majority of cancer agents and supportive care prescriptions** (e.g. anti-nausea and antibiotics) are **generic** medicines. Generic medicines represent close to 70% of prescription medicines in Europe.
- The societal value of existing medicines in the treatment of cancer should encourage careful and strategic consideration of **procurement and purchasing policies**, conducive to **ensuring availability.**