

Revising the EU pharmaceutical legislation and putting People before (Pharma) Profits

EPHA welcomes the European Commission's proposal and calls for a balanced debate so that the legislation adopted serves the needs of all people living across the EU and not just the provision of incentives to the pharmaceutical sector.

This lunchtime, the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) was pleased to attend the European Commission's announcement of its proposal reviewing EU pharmaceutical legislation.

EPHA and its members and partners welcome this long-awaited revision and now call on the European Parliament and the Council of Minister to ensure it addresses four key priorities:

- Prevent, monitor and mitigate the impacts of medicine shortages
- Ensures equal access to affordable treatments across the EU
- Provides transparency in the costs to tax payers and health systems
- Addresses the antimicrobial resistance crisis affordably

As sky-rocketing prices and increasing medicine shortages are threatening access to affordable medicines for people across EU member states, this revision is a once in a generation opportunity to address these important issues. Shortages of medicine undermine patients' right to timely and equitable access to quality healthcare and high prices of medicines threaten patients' access and the sustainability of healthcare systems.

"We welcome the EC's efforts in addressing unequal access to medicines across the Union. Where you live shouldn't determine whether you have access to the medicines you need, especially within the European Union", said Dr Milka Sokolović, Director General of EPHA.

For years, EPHA has been actively involved in the dialogue and consultations leading to the package of proposals announced today. Patients, healthcare professionals and NGOs representing civil society have been waiting decades for this revision.

"The EU pharma legislation includes very generous rewards in the form of data and market exclusivities for the pharmaceutical industry. However, current rules don't address the unequal access to medicines across different EU countries or ask the pharmaceutical industry for obligations in return for these. Today's revision is a unique opportunity to rebalance the status quo", said Dr Rosa Castro, Senior Policy Manager at EPHA.

The revision of the EU pharmaceutical legislation offers a unique opportunity to address structural barriers such as lack of transparency in pharmaceutical markets. More transparency of supply chains as well as overall more transparency on R&D costs will shed light and help to strike the right balance between innovation incentives and access to affordable medicines.

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The revision is also intended to address the lack of new antibiotics, crucial to combat the current antimicrobial resistance (AMR) pandemic. However, EPHA along with its members, and many partners of the European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines, have warned against the creation of a new market exclusivity (voucher). Evidence points against this system as costly, inefficient, and unable to address the real barriers to the development of new antibiotics. EPHA, therefore, calls for better alternatives such as those recently outlined in a report commissioned by the EU HERA. The EU should address access to new and old affordable antibiotics to fight against AMR with urgency and without undermining access to other affordable medicines.

EPHA calls the members of the European Council and the European Parliament to have a thorough but effective discussion and adopt a revision that puts people and patients at the forefront and it stands ready to support these discussions.

Note for editors – not for publication:

About EPHA

The [European Public Health Alliance](#) is a member-led organisation made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups. We work to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. Our actions and campaigns reflect our values: equity, solidarity, sustainability, universality, diversity, and good governance. Since formal establishment in spring 1993, EPHA has built a solid network of 80 members dedicated to providing better health for all.

Questions or inquiries?

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