

A report published in the UK this week has called for medicines to be exempted from EU trade law.

The report on the subject of medicines shortages was published by the “All Party Pharmacy Group” and made the principal recommendation that: “While European law provides for the free movement of goods across borders within the EU, there is also scope to exempt certain goods if their free movement threatens public health. We believe the Government needs to consider the use of this exemption in the best interests of UK patients”.

Prior to 2008 the UK had been a strong parallel importer from other countries but changes in the Sterling/Euro exchange rate has made UK prescription medicines relatively cheaper than those in the Eurozone and increased export of medicine from the UK.

The group reviewed the provisions of the European Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and noted it includes explicit provision to exempt certain goods from free movement if such movement poses a risk to public health.

The All-Party Pharmacy Group is a group of UK politicians from across the political parties. Its focus is on issues affecting the profession of pharmacy and is funded in its activity by a range of pharmacy organisations.

18 May 2012

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