



**15TH JULY 2013**

Member countries of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) have issued a jointly agreed statement expressing apprehension about the impact of public spending austerity on services to patients in hospitals.

Amongst the negative impacts of public spending austerity causing concern to hospital pharmacists are:

- increasing expectancy placed upon patients to meet the up-front costs of their medicines;
- the unintended impacts national cost-cutting measures are having in respect of medicines shortage;
- short-staffing in hospitals;
- diminished opportunities for healthcare professional training and development; and,
- shrinking investment in areas of patient safety enhancement.

EAHP's members have called for a European Commission review into the potential for greater joint level cooperation between governments in terms of reducing the detrimental health impacts of austerity measures. Such a review could be conducted in the context of both the pan-European aspects of these problems, and the remit of the European Union to take action in the area of public health, as per article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Speaking about the new policy statement, **EAHP President Dr. Roberto Frontini** said:

*"Hospital pharmacists, by the nature of our profession, are highly attuned to detecting patient safety threats. So with the impacts of public spending squeezes now keenly felt in almost all European countries, we call for greater caution, care and compassion by policy-makers when it comes to the area of health. Too much progress has been achieved in previous decades to be casually discarded in a rush to resolve macro-economic challenges. Sober analysis must be made of the patient safety implications of all decisions, as well as the impacts on sustainable health services.*

*I see significant potential value that could be delivered by the European Commission taking a proactive role in helping member states navigate the current financial challenges to health systems. Ultimately, we all have a duty to ensure that it is not the sick and vulnerable that pays the price of austerity."*

**ENDS**

For further information please contact [info\[at\]eahp\[dot\]eu](mailto:info@eahp.eu) <sup>[1]</sup>

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

1. EAHP is an association of national organisations representing hospital pharmacists at European and international levels. More information about the EAHP and its history [here](#) <sup>[2]</sup>.
2. EAHP's statement on public spending austerity and its impact on health services is available to read [here](#) <sup>[3]</sup>.
3. The statement was debated, discussed and approved at EAHP's recent General Assembly held in Athens 13-16 June 2013. The General Assembly brings together EAHP's 34 member

country associations and is the sovereign policy passing body of the Association.

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#### **Links**

[1] <https://www.eahp.eu/contact/info/eahp/eu> [2] <http://www.eahp.eu/about-us> [3]  
<http://www.eahp.eu/content/public-spending-austerity-and-its-impact-health-services>