

Access to medicines - meeting the needs of patients



Hospital pharmacists across the world are working every day for

their patients to ensure that they receive the medication they need to improve their health and to prevent and cure diseases. However, sometimes the medicine that is suited for an individual patient is not accessible. Growing healthcare expenditure has become a problem for many European countries. Innovative drugs, in particular, place an additional strain on already tight hospital budgets. Patients are directly affected and increasingly faced with avoidable accessibility and affordability issues. Besides the constraints faced by public health budgets, there are other barriers to treatment access. These include the growing problem of medicines shortages, delayed market access for new treatments in some European regions or increased out of pocket costs for patients.

EAHP's Position Paper on Access to Medicines advocates for affordable medicines of good quality that are provided in a timely manner to patients. To achieve this goal barriers to treatment access need to be broken down and the uptake of enablers that promote and safeguard the access of patients to both new life-saving medicines and older, essential medicines must be increased.

Barriers to treatment access	Enablers to treatment access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of purposeful procurement practices • National pricing and reimbursement policy choices jeopardising patients' adequate access • Medicine shortages • Unavailability in certain markets, leading to inequity between Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Technology Assessments (HTAs), including common reports at EU level • Collaboration and best practice sharing on pricing and reimbursement • Increasing the use of prevention measures • Fostering innovation and research

To achieve an equilibrium between the barriers and the enablers to treatment access, EAHP

- recommends that the expertise of the hospital pharmacist in pharmacoeconomics and the assessment of drug effectiveness be leveraged and well utilised within value-based

evaluation approaches. Additionally, the implementation of the forthcoming HTA Regulation should be used for the expansion of healthcare professional input in HTAs at both European and national level.

- supports the view of EURIPID and strongly recommends that this tool is not applied on its own but in conjunction with other policy measures, including transparency;
- calls on hospital managers and its members to work together to increase the uptake of risk assessments in hospitals; and,
- urges increased investment to support the development of innovative proposals and the encouragement of practice-based research projects to investigate new fields of infectious disease control such as immunotherapy and to optimise the cost-effectiveness of systems for surveillance on antibiotic use and resistance.

In striving for a European Health Union aided by the implementation of the Pharmaceutical Strategy, EAHP is committed to working together with the European institutions and other stakeholders by giving a voice to access issues that otherwise might be forgotten.

Read EAHP's Position Paper on Access to Medicines [HERE](#) ^[1]

Last update: 14 June 2021

Links

[1] https://www.eahp.eu/sites/default/files/eahp_position_paper_on_access_to_medicines.pdf