

In a statement published this week EAHP has emphasised the seriousness of medicines shortage problems, outlined some solutions and called for a European-wide investigation of the problem.

EAHP's recent General Assembly of 31 member countries prioritised the issue for discussion and resolved that the solutions to the shortage problem include:

- greater prescriber awareness of shortage difficulties and willingness to discuss the matter with hospital pharmacist colleagues;
- vigilance by hospital pharmacists and pro-active information-sharing with health professional colleagues about the problem;
- use of quotas by wholesalers to ensure fair distribution when demand exceeds supply;
- adequate notice and alerts by manufacturers, and the maintenance of buffer stocks; and,
- rigorous action by regulatory agencies including monitoring of shortages and best practice sharing

EAHP's statement also called for the European Commission to commence an investigation of the medicines shortage problem looking at:

- the issue of free movement of goods, and whether or not this is a factor in undermining national medicines supply chains, and if so, how can the conflict best be resolved at a European level;
- the extent to which European Guidelines on Good Distribution Practice of Medicinal Products for Human Use (94/C 63/03) are being adhered to; and,
- the extent to which this Guideline may need to be updated in view of the shortage problem.

Commenting on the statement, Dr. Roberto Frontini, President of the EAHP, said:

"I have great fears for patient safety if the medicines shortage problem in Europe continues or worsens. Medicines are not simple items of commerce, they are an essential component of patient care and in the hospital sector they must be administered to the patient in a timely manner. Furthermore managing medicines shortages and ensuring continuity of supply can also divert significant amounts of a hospital pharmacist's time and attention from other tasks important in the provision of high quality, safe and efficacious care."

"I hope EAHP's statement can be a helpful step in gaining a consensus amongst stakeholders about the solutions that are required, and in bringing an early end to this concerning problem."

Press Release [here](#) [1].

EAHP statements [here](#) [2].

13 July 2012

Links

[1]

https://www.eahp.eu/sites/default/files/files/PN_EAHP%20Medicines%20Shortage%20statement%20_2_.pdf
[2] <http://www.eahp.eu/Advocacy/Statements>