

A FRAMEWORK FACILITATING ACCESS TO MEDICINES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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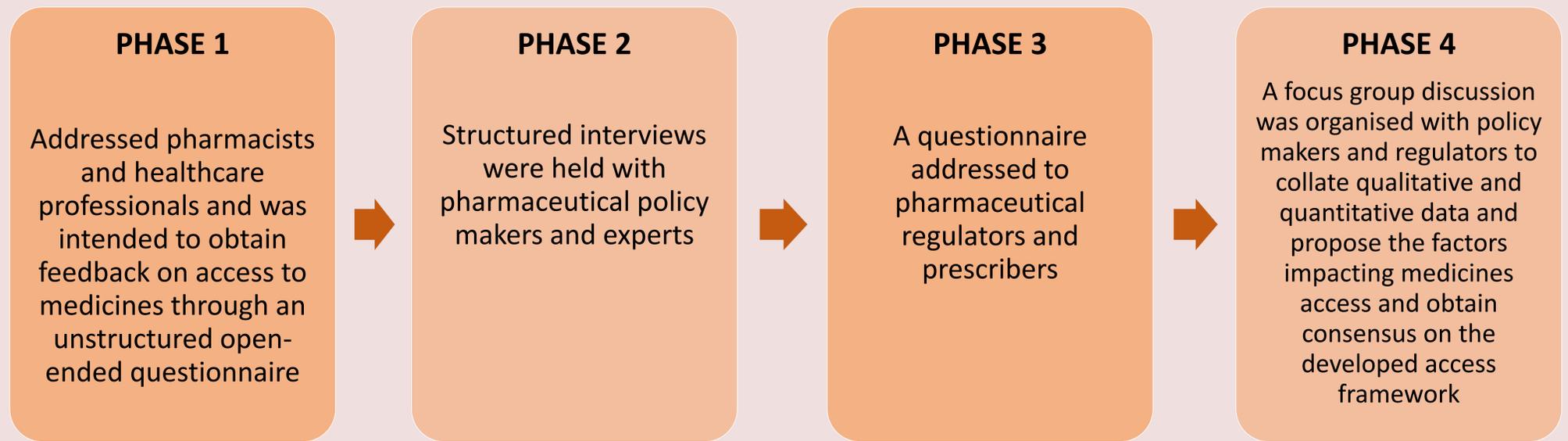
BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE

In the European Union, access to medicines is established as a fundamental right, enforceable through the judicial system. However, equity to access has become increasingly challenging, with Member States adopting different healthcare models seeking to attain cost-containment quality of care and improved patient outcomes. As a result, patients experience disparate levels of access to medicines. Ensuring enhanced, timely and equitable access is acknowledged as an important goal. This study sought to identify access enablers which may be embedded in the wider health system domain and flexibly adopted by EU Member States.

AIM

To identify and evaluate factors which impact medicines' access and propose a methodology enabling sound decision-making strategies optimising timely patient access to effective medication.

METHOD



RESULTS

The developed access framework consists of four dimensions that highlight indicators which support strategies to optimise timely patient access to medication:

DOMAIN	INDICATORS
Uptake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reimbursement • Affordability • Sustainability
Utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortages • Rational use through protocols • Educational material
Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilisation studies • Prescribing databases • Patient registers
Re-Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-appraisal • Actioning of audit results

CONCLUSION

The developed access framework can be implemented across different healthcare ecosystems and in different EU countries to identify strategies and actions that improve timely patient access to good quality, safe and effective medicines.

This structured generic framework that provides a common decision-making platform, but which may be flexibly adopted by the Member States offers an opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness and resilience of European health systems and provide improved patient care.

Access to effective medication is a multi-faceted issue which, unless appropriately understood and managed, has the potential for grave repercussions to public health.

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