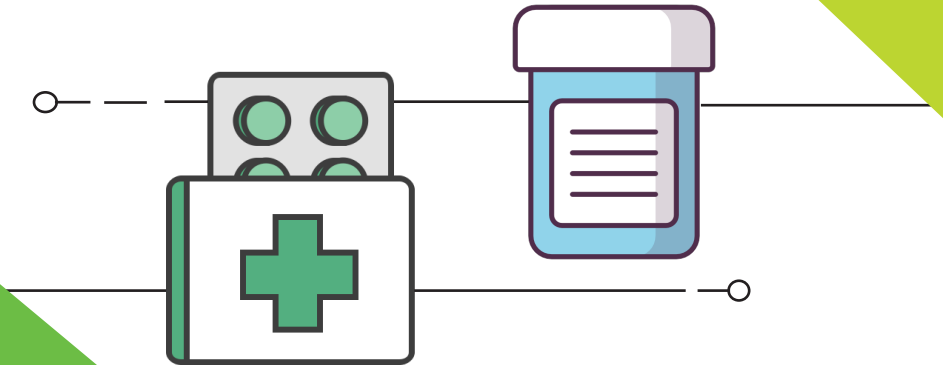


# 2018 EAHP Survey on Medicines Shortages

## Government officials



- Medicines shortages were reported to be a major issue faced in hospitals across Europe.
- In terms of delivering the best care to patients and/or operating the hospital pharmacy, an overwhelming 90% of respondents answered 'Yes', providing strong evidence that shortages of medicines is an extremely common problem in hospitals today. 7% of respondents answered 'No', and 3% were unsure.
- Antimicrobial agents were the type of medicine most frequently reported as having shortage problems, with 77%.
- The most frequent response when asked how often does your hospital pharmacy experience medicines shortages was 'weekly' with 39% of the responses, followed by 'daily' (36%), 'monthly' (16%) and 'occasionally' (11%), which shows most hospitals are experiencing shortages on a frequent basis.

## What impact medicines shortages had on patient care?



59% care delayed



31% cancellations of care



25% medication errors



25% suboptimal treatment



20% increased length of hospital stay



5% readmissions due to treatment failure



1% death

## Hospital pharmacists' experience with shortages

When hospital pharmacists asked to provide details about their own personal experiences with medication shortages, one theme that emerged in the responses was the lack of reliable or timely information from manufacturers and suppliers on the commencement or duration of shortages.

- **“Increased amount of time spent collecting information** from pharmaceutical companies, wholesalers, other pharmacies, pharmaceutical salesmen to find available substitutes and/or remainders of stock” – Austria
- **“Often it is difficult to get an information about how long the shortage will be.** So, you don't know how much of a replacement medicine you have to buy (which is most often more expensive)” – Switzerland
- **“Most of the time, we don't have information about the shortage situations.** We just discover it few day after the order and it's already too late because we have 1 or 2 month's storage” – France

## Does your country have a system for shortages in place?



67% of respondents answered 'Yes'. However, only 56% of these respondents thought the system to be effective.

Although the responses varied a lot by country (for example in some countries it is the hospital pharmacist who reports shortages, others may rely on industry to report them), the most frequently reported issues with the reporting systems were shortages not being reported, companies being under no obligation to report shortages and the system not being user friendly.

Some comments from respondents who reported their system to be effective include the information being updated daily, the ability for anybody to report a shortage and information being provided on alternate medicines.

## Which is the policy solution with the most support ?

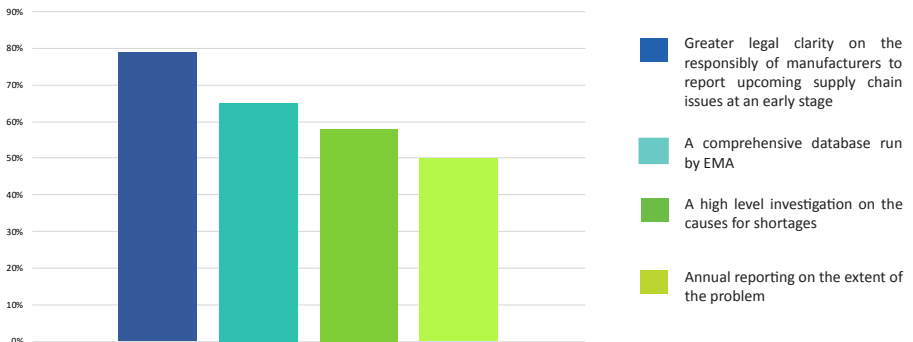
# 43%

The medicines shortages catalogue of the EMA

# 42%

None of the above, which may cover people who do not support any of the policies, but also people who are not aware of these policies and what they are (e.g. *“not sure what these are and I don’t have time to read up on each option”*).

## Proposed policy solutions on medicines shortages



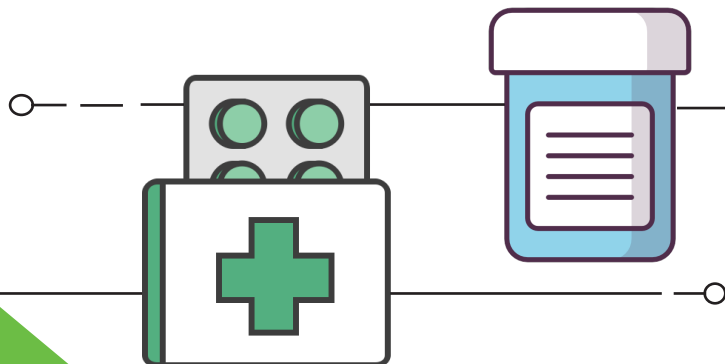
This is the same order the proposals were ranked in the 2014 survey.

Throughout the survey there were many comments regarding pharmacists not being aware of supply issues until a delivery did not show up and that the reporting system for medication shortages in their country was weakened by a lack of obligation for manufacturers to share information on supply issues.

Freetext recommendations from respondents include mandatory reporting of shortages by manufacturers, as well as providing accurate information on return dates. Many respondents would like to see manufacturers to have a legal obligation to maintain stock levels and to ensure supply of medicines. Several comments highlight problems when importing medicines from other countries, and the differences in price of the same medicine across Europe. There are responses calling for a central lead/agency to work on the problem to reduce duplication of efforts in identifying alternatives (either at European, EU, or national level).

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