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Pharmaceutical Legislation: **European Parliament recognises the special nature of medicines**

The PGEU welcomes the outcome of the vote in the plenary session of the European Parliament on the Review of the Pharmaceutical Legislation. Through its vote, the European Parliament has confirmed once more that via their elected representatives, citizens recognise and appreciate that **all medicines are special products** not to be treated as ordinary consumers goods. By adopting its reports the Parliament has recognised that in all phases, from production through supply to post marketing surveillance, medicines requires special provisions to ensure that Public Health is guaranteed at all times, in accordance with the principle expressed in article 152 of the Treaty.

In particular, the PGEU welcomes the adoption of **amendment 96** (Directive 2001/83/EC), which recognises the guarantees provided by the pharmacist, as the health professional expert in medicinal products¹, in their responsibility for the supply of all medicines. Through this vote, the European Parliament has demonstrated that it considers **access to highly qualified professional advice and tailored pharmaceutical care services as necessary for a safe and effective supply of all medicines**. The PGEU and its members are committed to ensuring that such services are maintained and further developed to respond to the needs of European citizens.

The PGEU is convinced that **objective, unbiased and comprehensive information on medicines and health issues have to be guaranteed to all citizens**. Therefore, a clear distinction between information and advertising has to be maintained. To this end the PGEU welcomes the adoption of **Amendment 101**, (Directive 2001/83/EC) which rejected the Commission proposal for a pilot project affecting the provision of "information" on POM²s in three diseases areas. It is the opinion of the PGEU that the Commission proposal did not provide the necessary guarantees to ensure that such a crucial distinction would be adequately maintained. The G-10 Medicines Group has also recognised³ that community pharmacists and health professionals are an important, reliable and accessible source of information on medicines and health issues. The PGEU and its members are committed to further developing their role in this respect to respond to the increasing needs of citizens for information, and to adapt to new developments in society.

The importance of ensuring Public Health at all times is also reflected by the adoption of **amendment 95**, imposing an obligation to guarantee supply of medicines throughout all the distribution chains, the PGEU welcomes this amendment. Through national legislation or deontological codes, pharmacists are already meeting such obligation in the best interests of European citizens.

END

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European Association representing Community Pharmacists. PGEU members are the professional bodies and community pharmacists' associations in 28 European countries.

For any additional information you might be interested in receiving about the PGEU and its activities, please do not hesitate to contact the Secretariat at pharmacy@pgeu.org ; www.pgeu.org

¹ Directive 85/432/EEC

² Prescription Only Medicines

³ The G10medicines Report - February 2002