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Pharmaceutical Group of European Union
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Pharmacy Led Adherence Improvements Could Save Billions for European Employers, PGEU Symposium Told

For Immediate Release

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European association representing more than 400,000 community pharmacists.

PGEU's members are the national associations and professional bodies of pharmacists in 31 European countries, including EU Member States, EEA/EFTA members and EU applicant countries.

For more information, please visit the PGEU website www.pgeu.eu or contact Ms Giovanna Giacomuzzi, PGEU Communications and Policy Officer (tel. +32 2 238 08 18).

The potential savings for employers from improved adherence to medication could run into billions of Euros, the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union -PGEU -Annual Symposium in Paris was told on Monday the 18th of June.

Former Dutch Minister of Health Ab Klink, now Professor of Care, Labour market and Government at the VU University in Amsterdam, pointed to studies in the UK which suggest that improved adherence in just one disease group, COPD, could potentially save up to € 3,100 Bn for employers from reduced absenteeism and increased productivity, results that could be reproduced across the EU.

The Symposium also learned that pharmacy led patient follow up could reduce hospitalizations by two thirds, especially for patients with multiple diseases, with preventable medication related admissions cost savings worth € 94 million per year. A recent study carried out in Cadiz, Spain, presented by **Dr M. Angel Gastelurrutia**, from the **Pharmaceutical Care Research Group of the University of Granada**, also showed that medication review of elderly patients with polypharmacy could save on average 7 euros per patient per month.

The PGEU Annual Symposium, this year dedicated to the theme: "**Community Pharmacy: Minimizing Risks, Maximizing Benefits to Patients**", also explored the increasingly important role of pharmacists in Pharmacovigilance reporting. The recently adopted EU Directive on Pharmacovigilance recognises the key role of pharmacists in reporting adverse reactions to medicines.

Head of Medical Information Sector of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) Dr I. Moulon described the number of areas of active collaboration between EMA and pharmacists, particularly in the dissemination of safety communication to the public, in the prevention and reporting of medication errors, in providing feedback on the use of medicines for the purpose of benefit/risk decision-making, and on the revision of guidelines.

A number of distinguished speakers, guests and over 120 national representatives from the pharmacy profession in Europe attended the debate hosted by the French Presidency of PGEU.

The PGEU meeting also outlined plans to finalise a 'Blueprint' for European community pharmacy, stressing the opportunities for community pharmacists to increase their contribution to health systems and help make them more efficient.

PGEU President Ms Isabelle Adenot: "At the heart of each European community, there is a pharmacist. Pharmacists are recognized by the public for their expertise, accessibility and ethics; they are essential health actors and create social cohesion, a double role that has earned them the trust of patients. In a European context of economic crisis et increasing demand of healthcare, sharing our vision on pharmacists' contribution on health systems' efficiency and on the personalized patient management is essential".

