



PGEU GPUE

*Pharmaceutical Group of European Union
Groupement Pharmaceutique de l'Union Européenne*

Elections to the European Parliament 2019 - A Statement from the Pharmacy Profession

The new term of the European Parliament will offer an unprecedented opportunity for Members of the European Parliament to determine the course of EU action on health issues. Indeed, 2019 will be a crucial year for the EU institutions to decide on whether maintaining health policy in the EU agenda. PGEU calls for the continuation of a comprehensive and coherent EU approach to health and for health dossiers, including medicines and medical devices, to remain within the competences of a dedicated Directorate General for Health.

A new regulatory framework, which will become binding on 2020 and 2022, is expected to increase the safety, development and performance of **medical devices** and **in-vitro diagnosis medical devices**.

Furthermore, as of February 2019, all prescription medicines packages entering the EU will need to carry special safety measures, as foreseen in the **Falsified Medicines Directive**, to prevent counterfeit medicines reach European patients.

A new Regulation on **veterinary medicines**, recently adopted by the European Parliament, will introduce more responsible ways to produce, supply and use medicated feed to tackle antimicrobial resistance.

These three pieces of legislation are clear examples of what EU Member States can do together to provide added benefit and contribute to an EU in which a high level of health protection and access to safe and high-quality healthcare are a reality for everyone.

In addition to specific legislative initiatives, it is vital to maintaining health matters high in the political agenda of the European institutions. For example, the European Commission has recently launched initiatives in the following areas:

- Vaccination
- Anti-microbial resistance
- e-health and digital health data
- Medicines for children and rare diseases
- Artificial Intelligence
- Health Inequalities

Last but not least, in 2019 EU Member States as well as the EU institutions themselves will face an unprecedented challenge following the exit of the UK from the EU. At this stage, the impact of **Brexit** on the continuity of supply of medicines to patients and the recognition of professional qualifications for health professionals in both sides of the Channel is still uncertain. However, the European Medicines Agency has stated it is likely this will result in medicines shortages and it may also impact clinical research which is crucial to deliver innovative treatments to patients.



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The Pharmacy profession strongly believes that, working together, the Member States of the EU can add genuine value to national efforts to improve the effectiveness of health systems and delivering patient-centred-care to their communities. Members of the European Parliament have an important role in promoting and facilitating such coordination.

We believe however that this should happen within the framework of certain principles:

1. **All EU citizens**, regardless of their position in life or their ability to pay, have the **right to receive affordable, timely and high-quality healthcare**. Guaranteeing the **availability of medicinal treatment to patients** within the EU is key in this regard.
2. To **enhance the health status and quality of life of EU citizens** it is crucial to involve healthcare professionals in raising public health awareness, participating in disease prevention and control and supporting self-care.
3. Promoting a **responsible use of digital solutions in healthcare** to complement the face-to-face advice delivered by health professionals to patients.
4. The **main driver of EU policies concerning pharmaceuticals and health technologies** should be **promoting and protecting health and patient safety**. The success of health systems must be measured by how healthy patients are, not by their contribution to the EU single market or to economic growth.
5. Providing **innovative and effective pharmaceutical services** is essential to reduce burden on other health care services and ultimately **improve the sustainability and resilience of European health systems**.

We call on candidates for the European Elections, of whatever political orientation, to adopt and promote these principles and to guarantee that health remains a top priority for the EU institutions.