



# A vision for community pharmacy in Europe

Empowering pharmacists

Transforming pharmacies

Enhancing public health



# Key initiatives

-  **Delivering safe, continuous, person-centred care**  
Community pharmacies ensure that people can always access their medicines and receive trusted, personalised advice for safe and effective treatment.
-  **Pharmacies as integrated health hubs**  
Pharmacies provide prevention, screening, and vaccination as part of everyday care, especially in communities where other health services are limited.
-  **Clinical excellence and expanded scope**  
Pharmacists act as first-line clinical experts, managing minor conditions and supporting treatment continuity in collaboration with other health professionals.
-  **Crisis preparedness**  
Community pharmacies form a trusted, decentralised safety network that supports the supply of medicines, triage, and public health response in times of crisis.





# Key initiatives

-  **A thriving, future-ready workforce**  
A strong and motivated pharmacy workforce is built through fair pay, modern education, and clear career pathways.
-  **Digital transformation with a human face**  
Digital tools support safer, more connected care while allowing pharmacists to spend more time with patients.
-  **Economic resilience**  
Sustainable funding models recognise the full value of pharmacy services and enable long-term investment in care and innovation.
-  **Environmentally friendly practice**  
Pharmacists promote responsible use of medicines and sustainable practices to protect both public health and the environment.



# Content

1. Introduction
2. Who we are
3. A changing environment
4. Our purpose, vision and mission
5. Our vision
6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives
7. Way forward





# 1. Introduction

## Europe's health systems stand at a turning point.

Chronic diseases account for much of the morbidity and spending across the continent, together with populations' ageing. Digital technologies are reshaping every interface of care; and climate-related or geopolitical shocks are adding new layers of uncertainty. The COVID-19 pandemic was a stress-test that exposed vulnerabilities, yet at the same time highlighted an unexpected strength: the unrivalled accessibility, responsiveness, agility and trust provided by Europe's community pharmacies.

Our ambition is to ensure that every European citizen can say with confidence:

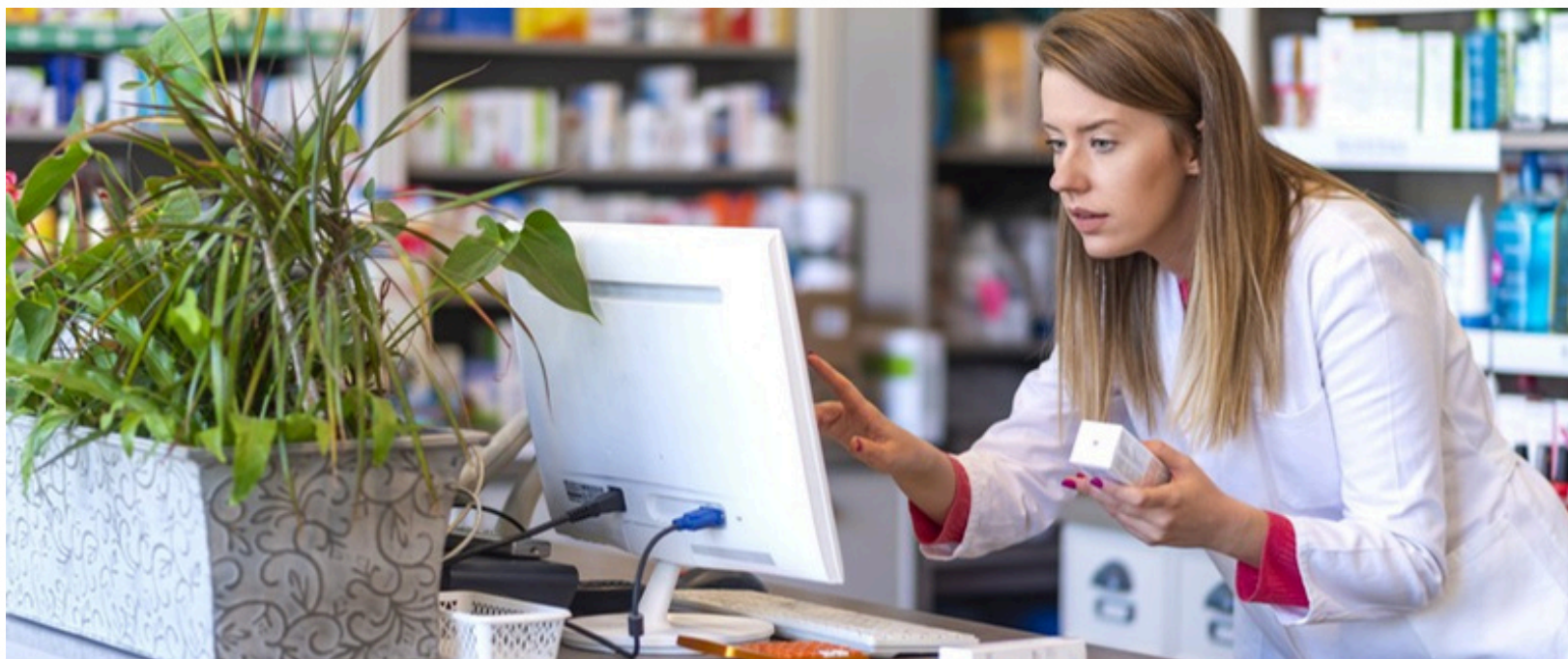
***"I can always rely on my community pharmacist, for advice, for early diagnosis, for treatment, for reliable care, and for protection in times of crisis."***

From emergency distribution of masks and vaccines to countering misinformation, pharmacists proved indispensable frontline actors and de facto "eyes and ears" of the public health response. That experience inspires this renewed Vision for Pharmacy, which charts how the profession will consolidate those gains and assume an even broader clinical, preventive, and digital role over the next years.



## 2. Who we are

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) represents the Chambers of pharmacists and the national associations of pharmacies in 33 European countries, giving voice to about **500.000 pharmacists** who serve over **500 million people** through a network of about **200.000 pharmacies**.



These pharmacies already constitute the most widely distributed element of the continent's primary-care fabric, often with extended opening hours that go beyond the general practice schedule, offering convenience and remaining accessible without appointment. They are therefore the natural bridge between advanced formal healthcare services and the daily realities of citizens' and patients' lives.

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**Our Vision builds on that community-embedded tradition while recognising pharmacists' evolution into sophisticated clinical, digital, and public health-oriented professionals.**  
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# 3. A changing environment

- **Demographic and epidemiological pressures** demand that long-term therapy, polypharmacy and self-management become routine concerns of primary care.
- **Medicine shortages** have consistently increased year after year, with pharmacists already spending on average one third of their time sourcing alternatives.
- **Environmental sustainability** and the carbon footprint of medicines have emerged as shared responsibilities across the supply chain.
- **Cybersecurity**, alongside the challenge of **falsified medicines**, adds new layers of diligence to the pharmacist's daily work.
- **Digital transformation** is accelerating, yet adoption remains inconsistent, and risks are widening inequities unless pharmacies can mediate inclusive and innovative solutions. The way it will be approached and addressed will make it either a threat or an opportunity.

Simultaneously, consumer expectations are shifting towards convenience, omnichannel contact, and personalised advice. Pharmacies that couple their local presence with secure digital interfaces can therefore occupy a privileged position, promptly responding to demand, yet retaining the human touch that underpins trust and pharmacists' expertise.





## 4. Our purpose, vision and mission



### Purpose

Our **purpose** remains to enhance the health and quality of life of the people and communities we serve within Europe's diverse healthcare systems architectures.



### Vision

Our **vision** is that pharmacists will be recognised everywhere as indispensable, reliable, approachable and digitally empowered healthcare providers, integral to resilient, patient-centred and sustainable healthcare systems.



### Mission

Our **mission** is to champion pharmacists as vital actors who safeguard pharmacotherapy, advance public health goals, strengthen community wellbeing, and drive continuous professional growth through research and innovation.





## 5. Our vision

The last 2030 roadmap proved that the profession could move decisively from a product-centred to **a patient-centred paradigm**. Vaccination services, medicines use reviews, electronic prescriptions and first-contact minor-ailment schemes have flourished in many jurisdictions. Yet the experience of COVID-19 and the persistent incidence of shortages reveal that pharmacies must go **further**, embracing real-time data, artificial intelligence, digital tools, inter-professional collaboration, and environmental stewardship.

This **Vision 2040** therefore pictures pharmacies as **multi-service health hubs** enhanced by digital tools. They will deliver screening, prescribing within defined protocols, pharmacogenomic counselling, chronic-disease monitoring, and structured adherence programmes, all complemented by state-of-the-art robotics, digital platforms and predictive inventory tools that anticipate patient demand and pre-empt supply disruptions.



# 6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives

## 1. Delivering safe, continuous, and person-centred pharmaceutical care

Community pharmacies play a vital role in ensuring **uninterrupted access to treatments** by dispensing a full range of medicines and medical devices, including prescription, over-the-counter, specialty products, complex advanced therapies and compounded formulations. Pharmacies offer extended opening hours and **24/7 services**, ensuring that patients can promptly access their treatments whenever and wherever they need them. Alongside dispensing, pharmacists will continue to provide **clear, reliable information tailored to each patient's needs**, promoting safe and effective use of medicines. They will support **medication adherence** through personalised counselling, follow-up interventions, helping patients stay on therapy and avoid complications. As trusted healthcare professionals, pharmacists will also contribute to **pharmacovigilance** by identifying, managing, and reporting adverse reactions, playing a key role in monitoring treatment safety across the population.



# 6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives

## 2. Pharmacies as integrated health hubs

By weaving preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic services into everyday encounters, pharmacies will normalise **proactive health maintenance**. Routine cardiovascular risk assessments, diabetes screening, cancer awareness campaigns or screenings and immunisation initiatives will become as familiar as dispensing itself. Such embedded public health activity will be particularly impactful **in rural or socio-economically deprived areas** where other services are scarce. Especially in these regions, pharmacies will continue having their doors open and providing **advanced services to those who need them the most**.

## 3. Clinical excellence and expanded scope

Pharmacists will act **as first-line clinical experts**, independently managing self-limiting conditions, adjusting chronic therapies in collaboration with prescribers, and interpreting point-of-care diagnostic tests, and exercising **greater autonomy to prevent treatment interruptions**, particularly in situations of medicine shortages where therapeutic alternatives are available. They will pioneer **personalised medicine** through pharmacogenomics and real-time biomarker monitoring, reducing hospitalisations and therapeutic inconveniences.



# 6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives

## 4. Crisis preparedness

Community pharmacies form an unparalleled **decentralised health safety network** that must be fully integrated into **national and EU-level preparedness and response frameworks**. Their widespread distribution, local trust, and established health service roles position them as **frontline actors in times of crisis**. By 2040, pharmacies should have clearly defined responsibilities in managing the supply of essential medicines, supporting disease surveillance, conducting frontline triage, and distributing emergency supplies such as vaccines, antivirals, and protective equipment. Pharmacists must be systematically trained in **crisis protocols**, including emergency communication, logistics coordination, and combating health misinformation.





# 6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives

## 5. A thriving, future-ready workforce

By 2040, the sustainability of community pharmacy will depend on a **strong, well-distributed, trained, and professionally fulfilled workforce**. Addressing current shortages requires coordinated investment in **fair remuneration**, attractive career pathways, and modern education aligned with pharmacists' expanding clinical and digital roles. **Cross-border mobility, mentorship, and continued professional development** will be essential to retain talent and ensure equitable access to care across all regions of Europe.

## 6. Digital transformation with a human face

A robust **e-prescription infrastructure**, coupled with pharmacists' access to **Electronic Health Records**, secure health-data exchange, and **decision-support AI**, will underpin seamless **continuity of care** while freeing pharmacists for richer patient interactions. Robust cybersecurity protocols together with full and transparent compliance with national and European regulations will protect **patient trust**. **Omnichannel presence** will further improve closeness to patients.



# 6. Goals, objectives and key initiatives



## 7. Economic resilience

**Remuneration models must evolve** to reflect the full value pharmacists bring to health systems. Linking compensation to outcomes, prevention, and quality of care will better capture the pharmacist's growing clinical and public health role. These models should support the delivery of new services, incentivise early intervention, and enable long-term investment in workforce, technology, and sustainability. A **resilient economic foundation** will ensure pharmacies remain accessible, innovative, and capable of meeting future health demands.

## 8. An environmentally friendly practice

Community pharmacies will fully integrate **environmental sustainability** into everyday practice. Pharmacists will promote responsible use of medicines, **reduce waste**, support proper disposal of unused and expired medicines, and embed eco-conscious choices in procurement and operations. A **green and resilient pharmacy workforce** will be at the heart of Europe's commitment to healthier people and a healthier planet.



# 7. Way forward

Our vision recognises **that citizens trust pharmacists**, and that Europe's dense network of community pharmacies constitutes **a resilience asset**. By investing in clinical skills, innovation, digital tools, sustainable economics and cohesive crisis planning, Europe can unlock that potential for **the benefit of every community**.



**The journey has already begun.** Community pharmacies are the connective tissue of this resilient, efficient, and people-centred healthcare system. Pharmacists will continue to help reduce hospital admissions, mitigate medicine shortages, guide chronic care, fighting inequities, and lead health promotion.

Through sustained collaboration with policymakers, academy, industry, patient groups and international partners, PGEU commits to shepherding this vision from blueprint to lived reality. The strength of the pharmacy profession lies not only in its scientific expertise but also in its physical presence where people live, work, and learn. That presence will remain our greatest asset amplified honed by technology, empowered by new competencies and guided by an unwavering commitment to public health.



## About Us

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the association representing community pharmacists in 33 European countries. In Europe over 500.000 community pharmacists provide services throughout a network of more than 200.000 pharmacies, to an estimated 500 million European citizens daily.



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