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European Doctors and Community Pharmacists discuss solutions to combat shortage crises

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) are today exchanging views on solutions for shortages of medicines, medical devices and healthcare professionals in a joint event with policy-makers, academics and professionals.

Pharmacists and doctors are concerned about the rise of medicine shortages across Europe, affecting the quality of care of patients.

PGEU President Aris Prins said “Doctors and pharmacists need earlier notifications of shortages. The security of supply could be further improved by ensuring that pharmaceutical companies have robust shortages prevention and mitigation plans in place and introducing progressive requirements for rolling buffer stocks. In the next EU mandate, the ongoing revision of the general pharmaceutical legislation and a possible Critical Medicines Act provide opportunities to offer solutions.”

Professionals are also concerned about shortages of some essential medical devices becoming increasingly common, with no alternatives available in many cases. CPME President Dr Christiaan Keijzer said “We need long-term solutions that address the inadequate implementation of the new medical device and in-vitro diagnostics regulations and notified bodies capacity, to ensure that patient safety is preserved.”

“Special attention should be paid the availability of orphan medical devices and there should be a prudent system of incentives that avoids the artificial ‘orphanisation’ of devices to exploit the system.”

Finally, pharmacists and doctors reaffirm how the shortages of healthcare professionals are threatening the foundations of the entire health sector. CPME and PGEU urge member states and the European Commission to implement a coordinated EU Health Workforce strategy that prioritises retention and recruitment by safeguarding minimum training requirements and lawful practice conditions, as well as investing in workforce planning.

Note to editors

*The **Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)** represents national medical associations across Europe. CPME contributes the medical profession's point of view to EU and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.*

*The **Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)** is the association representing Europe's community pharmacists, whose members are the national associations and professional bodies of community pharmacists in 33 European countries including EU Member States, EU candidate countries and EFTA members. PGEU mission is to promote the role of the pharmacist as key players in healthcare systems throughout Europe and to ensure that the views of the pharmacy profession are taken into account in the EU decision-making process.*