

EHFG 2017 MEDIA ADVISORY – TODAY'S QUOTES ON KEY THEMES:

ACCESS TO MEDICINES AND INNOVATION

Against the backdrop of demographic change, rising healthcare costs and international pressure to reduce wasteful expenditure of health systems, concerns about providing patients with the innovative medicines they need have come to dominate political agendas at all levels. Governments are struggling to offer access to medicines on a tight budget and they have lately been teaming up on joint procurement efforts to negotiate potentially lower prices for innovative medicines. At the same time, the pharmaceutical industry sees itself confronted with mounting pressure to reduce the prices of these life-saving therapies, which are often the product of years of investment, research, and development.

Pressure from the European Council (Dutch Council Conclusions of June 2016) has stimulated the European Commission to look into the incentives and rewards provided to the pharmaceutical companies to invest in the development of new medicines. This “Intellectual Property Incentives Review” is meant to assess the current system and the extent to which the model is sustainable. The review is expected to be completed in the first months of 2018, and will help the Commission decide whether legislative changes to the current IP and incentives framework need to be made.

Access to medicines and innovation is one of the four themes of the EHFG 2017, and is touched upon in many sessions. This challenging topic and its importance for shaping the future of health in Europe is ideally suited to be discussed in the formal and informal discussions and exchanges that the Forum offers.

Here's what Europe's leading health policy experts are saying about access to medicines and innovation at the EHFG 2017.

- **Clemens Martin Auer**, Director General, Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs, Austria
- **Nathalie Moll**, Director-General EFPIA
- **Nicola Bedlington**, Secretary General of the European Patients' Forum (EPF)
- **Melanie Kennedy**, Patient Advocate, Just Treatment, UK
- **Michael Schlander**, Professor of Health Economics, German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) and University of Heidelberg
- **Dorli Kahr-Gottlieb**, Secretary General, EHFG

“Facilitating access to medicines should be a core objective of national plans – beyond the health sector. If we are fully committed to engendering universal access to quality care, we should not be afraid to think outside the box and pursue the health angle in other areas of policy-making as well. It is also important to strike the right balance between sellers and buyers of medicines.”

Clemens Martin Auer, Director General, Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs, Austria

“With over 7000 medicines in development, our industry will continue to transform patient care and change the way diseases are managed. Introducing this exciting level of innovation will come with challenges. We welcome the dialogue on access to medicines, price, affordability and sustainability, on improving HTA, introducing pan-European relative effectiveness assessment (REA), developing outcomes-based reimbursement models where healthcare systems only pay for the value they get. We want to continue to work together on national framework agreements that balance access and affordability with support for innovation. But if we are to address the challenges facing patients and our healthcare systems, we need to drive innovation, bringing new treatments to tackle diseases like dementia, diabetes and cancer. New treatments whose development is based on having a framework of incentives that protect innovation and drive research and development to areas of unmet medical need.”

Nathalie Moll, Director-General, European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA)

“Meaningful patient engagement in innovation in all its guises (therapeutic, technology, social and systems) is key to ensuring **valuable** innovation that addresses unmet need. To address the fundamental access and inequity challenges facing Europe today, we need a collaborative, solution-oriented mind set involving all stakeholders, and moreover a real sense of urgency.”

Nicola Bedlington, Secretary General of the European Patients’ Forum (EPF)

“People should not have to go to great lengths in to receive early diagnosis and appropriate care. When thinking about solutions, it is important to speak to the patients and to take into account their perspective in the access to medicines debate. The system is broken, with some regions getting better served than others, and fault lies on all sides. The price of drugs is prohibitive, but we need to invest in better country structures and in developing a cancer strategy. National agencies should work better together and governments should cooperate with pharmaceutical companies.”

Melanie Kennedy, Patient Advocate, Just Treatment, UK

“Pharmaceutical pricing policies are perhaps more controversial than ever. The issue is aggravated by the complex nature of biopharmaceutical research, the cost, time and risk of new product development, and by the subsequent challenges related to market access and success. However, rather than the sunk cost of R&D, it is the value provided by new drugs that drives manufacturers’ revenues, which correspond to the acquisition costs of national health care schemes (NHS). Social willingness-to-pay to adopt a new intervention through coverage by the NHS should reflect the social value generated by the existence of that program (or for that matter, a new drug). This should shift the prevailing focus on cost per dose or cost per patient to a focus on the cost per member of the NHS shared health care resources, which reflects the (net) budget impact of the new program. Policy makers face the task to be better codify which types of evidence are expected in support of social value claims.”

Michael Schlander, Professor of Health Economics, German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) and University of Heidelberg

“Access to medicines has been a salient agenda item for quite a while now. As a neutral platform for inclusive discussion, it is our objective to ensure that all voices in the debate are heard, and that we are serious about finding real solutions. We are all part of the same system and by joining forces, we are



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better equipped to tackle today's problems and find effective ways to render health systems resilient and fit to respond to a rapidly changing health environment.”

Dorli Kahr-Gottlieb, Secretary General, EHFG

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact:

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