

Press Release
Athens 4/5/07

One-day Conference ΣfEE - E.F.P.I.A. on: “Patient Access to Medicines, Ensuring Product Quality, Information Technology in the Healthcare Sector”

The one-day conference organized by the Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (ΣfEE) and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (E.F.P.I.A.) on “**Patient Access to Medicines, Ensuring Product Quality, Information Technology in the Healthcare Sector**” took place on May 4 with great success. Ministers responsible for the health sector, representatives of the State, the scientific community, the academic community of the country, and of the European Community, honored the event with their presence.

All speakers agreed on the great importance of **direct access** to all medicine as a primary component for the promotion of public health, on the importance of all initiatives for the **safeguarding of medicine quality**, and of the need to **implement IT and technological modernization within the health system**.

Furthermore, regarding fees, **Mr. Athanasios Giannopoulos Deputy Minister of Health**, and **Mr. Dimitris Vayionas, EOF President**, assured that the matter will be settled.

Mr. Dionysios Sp. Filiotis, ΣfEE President, launched the proceedings and said “the benefit to society and to the family from maintaining public health on the highest level is worth many times the cost of new drugs and therapies.” Mr. Filiotis further stressed that “direct access depends on the interaction of initiatives, positions, and decisions of all those participating in the medicinal products market.” Mr. Filiotis also underlined the importance of **prescribing by brand name** as a necessary prerequisite for safeguarding the quality of medicinal products and he further stressed that “advanced IT infrastructure of the system will result in an annual economic benefit to the State higher than the annual cost of drugs, due to the drastic reduction of waste, which exceeds 20% of total health expenditure.” Finally, Mr. Filiotis said “Funds are not endangered by drugs. They are endangered by managerial weakness. And this is the reason why we have to move away from the age of carbon paper. Computerizing our system is the greatest project that our country is called upon to implement.”

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HELLENIC ASSOCIATION
OF PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

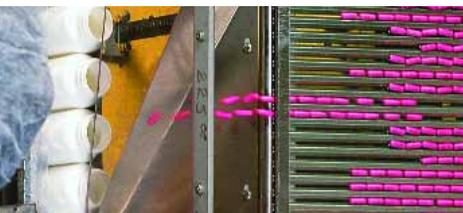
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European Federation of Pharmaceutical
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The President of SFEE Mr. Dionysios Sp. Filiotis, the Deputy Minister of Development Mr. John Papathanasiou, the Deputy Director General of EFPIA Mrs. Marie Claire - Pickaert, the Vice President of SFEE Mr. Pascal Apostolides and the Head of Government Affairs of ROCHE Mr. Peter Heer.



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In his address, the **Minister of Health and Social Solidarity Mr. Dimitris Avramopoulos** said, “ΣfEE is carrying out a very important task for the promotion of public health.” He also said “the government considers the medicinal product an investment for the health of its citizens and not an expenditure. From its first day in office, the new government made it very clear that it pursues a drug market focused on the citizen, with stable operating rules and constrained rate increases of the pharmaceutical expenditure.” Mr. Avramopoulos also underlined that, based on these principles, “the government abolished the reimbursement list which made citizen’s access to pharmaceutical therapies very difficult.” He also said “we implement the 90 day-period the European Legislation requires in order to incorporate a medicinal product into a price bulletin and put an end to practices that worked against the citizen.”

Deputy Development Minister Mr. G. Papathanasiou said “direct access to drugs is an obligation of the State and we abide by it.” He also pointed out that the government “places great emphasis on the value of a medicinal product and not just on its price.”

Deputy Health Minister Mr. Ath. Giannopoulos said “We must safeguard quality and low cost. However, expenditure is constantly increasing regarding new drugs because proprietary medicine is continuously developing and is today more developed than, for instance, in 1970. With the new drugs the number of surgical operations has been reduced significantly and this contributes to the restraint of total health expenditure.”

Mr. Ch. Protopapas, PASOK’s Head of Parliamentary Council on Health and Social Solidarity issues, said “failings in IT infrastructure and in monitoring the health system result in the absence of substantial control and in the loss of significant resources for its development.”

Deputy Director General of E.F.P.I.A., Ms. Marie Claire Pickaert, said, “ E.F.P.I.A. supports the positions and initiatives of ΣfEE and at the same time applauds the decision of the Ministry of Development to keep in line with European Legislation and issue price bulletins within 90 days.”

Mr. Vagionas, EOF’s President said “in Greece we have achieved high confidence in medicines. When they have been inspected and approved by EOF there is no doubt for their quality.”

Mr. Vas. Kondozeamanis, EOF’s vice President, said, “computerization of the Health Sector contributes greatly to the achievement of the political goals of the health system, macroeconomic stability, and macroeconomic effectiveness.”

Furthermore, **Mr. Demosthenes Mammonas, Secretary General of Social Securites at the Ministry of Employment and Social Protection**, said, “the modernization of IT in the Health sector is being promoted by the Government as one of the necessary prerequisites for long-term, strong social insurance.”

Mr. Peter Heer, Head of Roche’s Political Affairs division, said, “The pharmaceutical industry plays a decisive role in the provision of high quality medical care and in the reinforcement of the competitiveness of the European economy.”

Mr. Pascal Apostolidis, ΣfEE ’s Vice President, said “the state has set the correct basis for patient access to drugs, which is very important since the circulation of new innovative medicines contributes decisively to the promotion of public health.”



Mr. T. Zervakakis, ΣφΕΕ's Vice President, spoke on the increasing risks, at an international level, from the circulation of counterfeit drugs and said "it is very important that we are constantly on our guard to safeguard the high quality of all medicines."

Mr. C. Stefanadis, Cardiology Professor, said "the three parameters for a proper drug are quality, effectiveness, and cost. The final goal, however, is the patient's cure and we must not sacrifice the patient on the basis of cost."

Mr. G. Kyriopoulos, Health Economics ESDY Professor, said "A medicinal product with a brand name, the one with a commercial label, is the best in quality." He further pointed out: "Throughout the world, the "list" is 15th on the agenda. It has not been proven in any country that the "list" brings desired results."

Mr. G. Katzourakis, ΣφΕΕ Vice President, said "computerization of the system is the cornerstone for making the health sector healthy."

Mr. I. Yfandopoulos, Health Economics Professor at the University of Athens and EKKE President, said "the economic catharsis of social security funds is the primary condition for maintaining and reinforcing their capacity to guarantee direct access to all therapies and new medicines."