

PRESS RELEASE

SFEE: ONLY BRANDED MEDICINES GUARANTEE QUALITY, EFFICACY, AND SAFETY

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT AND PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES TO FREEZE MEDICINE PRICES FOR ONE YEAR.

Only branded medicines guarantee quality, efficacy, and safety. This is the main message of the one-day conference organized jointly by the Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (SFEE) and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries Associations (EFPIA).

Present at the conference, among other speakers, were Mr. Christos Folias, Minister of Development; Ms. Georgette Lalis, Director, European Commission Directorate General of Enterprise and Industry; Mr. Vasilis Kondozeamanis; President of the National Organization for Medicines (EOF); Mr. Theodore Abatzoglou, Deputy Governor of Greece's Social Insurance Institute (IKA), and other distinguished personalities from the healthcare sector.

Regarding the quality of medicines, Mr. Dionysios Filiotis, President of SFEE, said, "The main and most powerful pillar safeguarding the quality of medicines in Greece is prescribing medicines by brand name, on the exclusive responsibility of the physician.. Prescriptions of branded medicines safeguard the patient and the physician as it is clear that only BRANDED MEDICINES are the safest choice and offer maximum guarantees for quality and efficacy. A second powerful pillar is the system of the authenticity stripe and the double barcode, implemented by EOF, in the packaging of medicines. To this we must add the support of SFEE and EFPIA to the proposals of the European Commission for abolishing the re-packaging of medicines as a shield of protection against counterfeit medicines."

Agreement of medicine price freeze for one year between the Ministry of Development and Pharmaceutical Companies.

This is a very bold initiative of SFEE, which substantiated the responsibility and the social sensitivity of the Association. "Above all, our social sensitivity" underlined Mr. Filiotis.

Furthermore, Mr. Filiotis said: "As you know, medicines in Greece are subject to market decree which specify their price according to the average of the three lowest prices in the 27 countries of the European Union (the 2+1 formula). It should be pointed out that this system keeps prices at very low levels and we had suggested the implementation of a system based on the five lowest countries. Nevertheless, it is a system which is transparent, objective, and just. It should also be pointed out that the price increase of all raw materials as well as international and European price increases push medicine prices to even higher levels. Nonetheless, with a high sense of responsibility we decided to contribute to efforts in Greece and respond to the

general plea of the government for price containment in the market. Within this framework the pharmaceutical enterprises, in agreement with the Ministry of Development, proceeded to “freeze” medicine prices for one year.”

In the same spirit, Mr. Folias, Minister of Development, said in his speech: “We are securing and promoting direct access of everyone insured to high quality medicines and we are taking all the initiatives to maintain in the market old and valuable medicines. We congratulate SFEE for its decision to support the effort of the Ministry of Development and the Government in price containment.”

Ms. Georgette Lalis, Director, European Commission Directorate General of Enterprise and Industry, referred to the proposals of the European Commission to reinforce legislation that protects public health from the consequences of criminal activities, in the framework of globalized trade of counterfeit medicines and to prevent their entrance to the distribution chain throughout the European Union.

Mr. George Vlahos, Deputy Minister of Development, said: “The Greek medicinal market has many positive elements that it is obliged to maintain. The state will remain an assistant to the pharmaceutical sector’s effort to improve the conditions in the Greek market”. The deputy minister congratulated SFEE for its decision to proceed to the freezing of medicine prices.

Mr. Theodore Abatzoglou, Vice Governor of IKA, said: “The tender for the processing of approximately 25 million prescriptions concerning all persons insured is already in its final stage and will be completed within the summer.”

The conference ended with the speech of Mr. Vasilis Kondozeamanis, EOF President, who said: “Our goal is not the improvement of a bureaucratic mechanism for issuing circulation permits, but the securing of high standards of quality and safety in medicines.”