



the vital link in healthcare

Press Release

Pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers eHealth push strongly welcomed by Toomas Hendrik Ilves - President of the Republic of Estonia

Tallinn, Estonia, 8th November 2012– Yesterday morning the President of the Republic of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves welcomed a delegation* of members from the European Associations of Pharmaceutical Full-line Wholesalers (GIRP) to discuss the role and function integrated pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers play in the provision of eHealth services across Europe.

While pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers are the vital link in the supply of medicines between pharmaceutical manufacturers, pharmacies and patients, in the eHealth context they equally connect the supply chain partners for the benefit of patients.

On a mission to raise the general level of awareness, the GIRP delegation provided the President with an overview of the type and scale of eHealth services provided by integrated pharmaceutical full-line wholesalers. The delegation spoke about the role some GIRP members play in their national markets in driving the deployment of eHealth solutions through their entrepreneurial role in the healthcare arena and their unique position as integrated healthcare operators. Best practice examples from different European markets were provided, showcasing traditional ICT tools employed in the wholesale distribution sector as well as patient-specific eHealth application in support of patient compliance and personalised continuity of care.

GIRP also took the opportunity to update the President on major steps being taken by supply chain partners in terms of patient safety. GIRP and its supply chain partners** have embarked on developing a technical solution called the European Stakeholder Model (ESM). The ESM will deliver a medicines verification system, interlinking all EU member states through a European hub, but allowing for the medicine verification at the point of dispensing at the national level.

President Ilves, who led the EUs eHealth working group for a year and a half at the proposal of the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, stated it is the patient that should be the most important focus of the eHealth drive. He highlighted that obviously patients should be the owners of their health data which extends to include any data generated on the patient in the eHealth domain. In his view cross border collaboration is essential to ensuring compatibility and interoperability for patients to receive their prescribed medicines in other Member States and that such cooperation must allow for health care professionals to be able to access patients' electronic health files held by other Member States.

The head of state highlighted how eHealth has helped Estonia to be more visible and stronger. According to President Ilves, Estonia is a best in class show case in the field of e-prescribing with well over 90 percent of all prescriptions now being issued electronically. The President looks forward to remaining engaged with GIRP and its members on further eHealth activities and encourages members to continue advancing cross country collaboration in the eHealth sector.

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** European Association of Euro Pharmaceutical Companies (EAEPC); European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) and Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU).