

Brussels, 2 April 2026

## Open Letter from GIRP on the Impact of the Crisis in Iran on Access to Medicines in Europe

To EU and national policymakers,

The European Healthcare Distribution Association (**GIRP**) wishes to express its deep concern regarding the escalating crisis in Iran and its wider geopolitical consequences, notably the impact on global energy markets. These developments risk having immediate and severe repercussions on the European pharmaceutical supply chain and, ultimately, on patients' access to medicines. GIRP estimate that the crisis is already costing our members upwards of € 11 million per month in additional fuel costs for the delivery to pharmacies alone.

GIRP represents the national associations of **pharmaceutical systemic wholesalers** across Europe. Our members ensure the **continuous, safe, equitable and accessible** distribution of medicines from pharmaceutical manufacturers to Europe's more than 200.000 pharmacies and hospitals, every day and in all regions, including across the most rural and remote regions, ensuring access to medicines. Pharmaceutical systemic wholesalers are the backbone of Europe's medicines supply, guaranteeing availability under normal conditions and acting as the primary shock absorbers in times of crisis.

The current geopolitical situation is triggering fuel shortages, price spikes, and emergency rationing measures across Europe. For our sector, which is **entirely dependent on fuel and energy** to operate warehouses, temperature-controlled storage, and daily deliveries, such measures would have a direct and immediate impact on the ability to supply medicines.

Against this backdrop, GIRP calls on EU and national authorities to take urgent and targeted action:

**First**, we explicitly urge Member States to **exempt pharmaceutical systemic wholesalers from any fuel or energy rationing measures**, in light of their status as **critical infrastructure** and as essential services for public health. Any restriction on fuel access for our sector would directly translate into disruptions in medicine deliveries, critically undermining equal access for patients across Europe.

**Second**, we call on Member States to put in place **financial support mechanisms** to cover the extraordinary additional costs for fuel and energy resulting from the current crisis. Pharmaceutical systemic wholesalers cannot pass these costs on to customers within the supply chain, as prices and remuneration are highly regulated and tightly constrained. At the same time, our sector is already under severe financial pressure due to structurally inadequate remuneration systems across Europe, threatening its long-term survival and sustainability.

Such support could be channelled through **dedicated or emergency funds made available to systemic wholesalers**, recognising their unique role as the only actors capable of guaranteeing nationwide and equitable access to medicines, as supplied by manufacturers. Supporting pharmaceutical distribution is not a market intervention, but a **public health safeguard**.

Europe's resilience in times of crisis depends not only on manufacturing capacity, but equally on the ability to **store, transport, and deliver medicines to every patient, every day**. Ensuring the inter-operational and financial viability of pharmaceutical systemic wholesalers is therefore indispensable to protect patient safety and maintain public trust in our healthcare delivery systems.

GIRP and its members stand ready to engage constructively with EU institutions and Member States to ensure that emergency measures and crises preparedness fully reflects the realities of the medicines supply chain and protect patients across Europe.

Kind regards,



Katarina Gabrielson  
President



Kasper Ernest  
Director General