

PRESS RELEASE

GIRP welcomes the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe

Brussels, 26 November 2020

Brussels, Belgium – Full-service healthcare distributors welcome the approach outlined in the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe which was published yesterday by the European Commission. The strategy sets out ambitious, yet proportionate and pragmatic, approaches to future proofing the pharmaceutical sector for the years to come.

GIRP believes the proposed measures will help to ensure patients' access to safe and affordable medicines wherever, whenever needed by addressing a wide range of challenges and opportunities.

GIRP President, Bernd Grabner, stated "*The strategy lays out a forward-looking plan, and while building on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis, will assess all policy options to address the crucial issues of access and affordability, including shortages. The EU can play a more leading and progressive role in the development and management of supply issues and therefore we welcome the approach foreseen in the strategy and look forward to working with other stakeholders and authorities alike to bringing about workable solutions for the benefit of patients*".

GIRP Director General, Monika Derecque-Pois, stated "We welcome ambitions to enhance security of supply and address shortages through specific measures such as supply obligations for industry to ensure stocks; promoting earlier notification of shortages and withdrawals; and giving the EMA a stronger role to monitor and mitigate shortages".

The Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe comes a day after the close of GIRP's annual conference, which looked at the full-service healthcare distributors criticality for healthcare systems especially in times of crisis. Upon concluding the conference, President Bernd Grabner stated "Our sector is committed to working closely with manufacturers, other stakeholders such as pharmacies, and authorities in our continued response to COVID-19 and are preparing ourselves to play an important role in vaccine distribution".

Monika Derecque-Pois, GIRP Director General, stated "Full-service healthcare distributors have the right knowledge, skills and experience to support the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. The sector is ready to leverage its existing expertise and infrastructure to support vaccine deployment across Member States and ensure that vaccines are correctly stored and delivered securely and safely to vaccination sites in even the remotest parts of the continent".

For more information please contact:

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European Healthcare Distribution Association (GIRP) ([website](http://www.girp.eu))

GIRP, the European Healthcare Distribution Association, is the umbrella organisation for full-service healthcare distributors in Europe. It represents the national associations of over 750 pharmaceutical wholesalers serving 34 European countries, as well as major international and pan-European healthcare distribution companies. GIRP members employ over 140,000 people and distribute around 15 billion packs of medicines as well as a wide range of healthcare products per year. As the vital link in healthcare, they are committed to developing and providing innovative and efficient healthcare products and services to improve health and wellbeing of patients across Europe.