

Medicine supply shortages

IAPO Governing Board supports EMA common position statement



EMA Common Position on Supply Shortages of Medicines

We are pleased to confirm that the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) supports the Common Position on Supply Shortages agreed between patients', consumers, and healthcare professionals' organizations involved in the activities of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on *Supply Shortages of Medicines* in October 2013.

The IAPO Governing Board confirmed this support at its September 2014 meeting. As a membership alliance of almost 250 patients' organizations worldwide, IAPO strongly endorses the content and recommendations in the *Common Position on Supply Shortages of Medicines*. Patients' needs and the impact on patients of any shortage of medicines needs to be central to considerations and decisions taken to prevent, manage and remediate supply shortages.

IAPO highlights the need for further deliberation and development of the recommendations included in Section 3.5 (Other recommendations); in particular in regard to the use of unlicensed treatments, and the prioritisation and the management of extreme shortages. Policies and principles need to be supported by specifications and safety guidelines within the responsible agencies in each jurisdiction, with identified accountability and a clear mechanism for input and decision-making.

IAPO supports recommendations and actions that will strength collaboration between all organizations involved in the manufacture, distribution, prescription, regulation and use of medicines, including maintaining adequate records of adverse reactions. As a unique voice for patients worldwide we advocate for the importance of considering patients' needs and the necessity of effectively communicating with patients in the event of a supply shortage (or potential shortage) of medicines. This includes issues regarding hoarding and sharing medicines, the use of substitute or similar medication, and the risks and benefits of unlicensed treatment.

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