EAHP Says Future of Medicine Costs Needs Debate

The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) has highlighted the need to ensure sustainable and equitable access of medicines for patients. A new position paper has been published by the EAHP which talks about medications pricing. The paper has been approved by 34 member country associations.

In the policy statement, the EAHP urges the development of a system that does not put the burden of medicines cost directly towards the patient. It also calls for improved transparency in pricing because it is important for effective scrutiny of public expenditure. The paper also encourages the need to achieve a greater match between the price of the medicine and its value as well as the use of the hospital pharmacist's pharmacoeconomic expertise in this domain. Finally, the paper expresses the need for the assessment of the impact of generic tendering because it has been linked to the creation of supply chain vulnerability by consequent reduction in market providers.

According to Dr. Roberto Frontini, President of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists, "EAHP's activities in highlighting the problem of medicines shortages in Europe has drawn us inevitably to the topic of medicines pricing. In seeking to understand the factors that leave patients without medicines, issues of cost cannot be ignored. For this reason EAHP is seeking to promote public policy debate about how Europe pays for its medicines. Pushing cost towards patients undermines everything important in healthcare by financially punishing individuals for ill health. We need to understand where major cost burden is coming from, and that requires greater transparency."

He also points out that the task of matching the cost of medicines to their value is a complex and delicate task but the development of health technology assessment (HTA) protocols and the emerging skillsets of the hospital pharmacist in pharmacoeconomics can make an important contribution in this regard. In addition, he cautions that when searching for value for money, it is important that any actions taken do not inadvertently lead to a significant reduction in the available providers of a medicine as it can result in supply chain vulnerabilities.

Source: EAHP

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