Information Pack

About EHMA

The European Health Management Association (EHMA) is a non-profit membership association based in Brussels representing members from across the WHO Europe region. With our mission to promote excellence in health management for a healthy Europe, we have expertise in health policy, research, management improvement, stakeholder engagement, management training and education. Through our Annual Conference, Alliances, webinars, and other events we bring together stakeholders from across the health ecosystem. An important part of our work is to promote excellence in health management at European level through our EU Commission funded and privately funded projects. Several of our projects concern the upskilling of the health workforce and one key organisational priority is ensuring patients can access safe, quality care in hospitals where harm from medication is prevented.

The EPACT Alliance

Since February 2022, our AlliancE for the Digitalisation of HosPitAls MediCation Management PaThways (EPACT) has been advocating with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Medicines Agency to take action to reduce harm from medication errors. Medication errors can occur when a medicine has been inappropriately prescribed, prepared, dispensed, or administered to a patient. **In Europe, 1 person per 1,000,000 dies every day from a medication error**. One way to reduce harm from medication errors is to digitalise hospitals' medication management pathways. Currently, most hospitals prescribing, administrating, dispensing, and monitoring medication activities are manual. However, digital tools exist to reduce the number of errors in medication management processes. Thus, patient safety can be increased, and the risk of a health professional being involved in a medication error can be reduced.

To date, the Alliance has delivered and launched a white paper at the European Parliament, a position paper on the European Health Data Space (EHDS) Regulation – obtained clarification about the definition of *'pharmacy'* in the Regulation, co-organised a webinar for World Patient Safety Day and represented the Alliance's position at the recent WHO Global Ministerial Summit on Patient Safety.

This year, our work programme to raise awareness about the need to digitalise hospitals' medication management pathways includes the following activities:

Testimonials

The purpose of this work is to capture the lived experience of individuals, families and communities who have been involved in a medication error. Testimonials allow participants to share a testimony of their experiences of a medication error in a hospital setting. Testimonials from friends, family members, colleagues, patient safety officers and organisations who have supported individuals during an investigation of the alleged error will be accepted. Individuals' experiences of these errors can be either direct or indirect.

Unlike numbers, real-life stories have the potential to move policy and decision-makers at all levels and provide insight into the impact of a medication error on individuals. Individuals' testimonials will be shared in meetings with policy and decision-makers at the European level. Individuals can also share their testimonials at EHMA webinars and in-person events supporting advocacy efforts to

implement actions for improvements in patient safety and for real investments to introduce digital tools and equipment for medication management in hospitals.

Medication Shortages research

Following the declaration of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), the creation of a European Health Union prepared for the health crisis became a strategic priority. Consequently, to ensure pandemic preparedness the mandate of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) was revised. Under the new mandate, the EMA is tasked to monitor, prevent, and manage actual, or potential, medicine shortages in the EU Member States. To achieve this objective, the setting up of a European Shortages Monitoring Platform (ESMP) is expected by 2025.The ESMP will be used to facilitate information gathering from key stakeholders, including hospitals and National and Regional Competent Authorities, on medicines supply and demand to monitor, prevent, and manage actual or potential medicine shortages.

With medication shortages on the rise, the availability of medicines is becoming a strategic policy priority for Member States and the Union. Thus, the successful functioning of the ESMP will depend on data collected by National Competent Authorities (NCAs) from a variety of sources. Information gathered on hospitals' medication stocks from NCAs will be key data for the ESMP. However, the capacity of NCAs to provide data on hospitals' medication inventories to the EMA for the ESMP to prevent, mitigate, and manage medicine shortages is unclear as this data needs to be collected from hospitals with limited access to digital tools.

Thus, EHMA is investigating the capacity of NCAs, at the national and regional levels, to provide data on hospitals' medication inventories to the EMA for the ESMP For the 2025 deadline. The online semi-structured comprises eight questions annexed to this document.

Information gathered by this research will be presented to the European Medicines Agency and published in a policy brief, with recommendations, that will be shared with key stakeholders. Currently, we are seeking to set up online interviews with stakeholders working on the topic of medication shortages in NCAs in Italy, Romania, Germany, and Spain.

How you can participate

To participate in this research, or to share a testimonial with us, please contact Evelyn Donohoe at evelyn.donohoe@ehma.org.

ANNEX

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Based on your experience during the COVID crisis, which stakeholders played an important role in managing medicine shortages?
2. What are the main benefits of having visibility of stocks in hospitals during crisis periods?
3. How do you plan to estimate medicine demand from hospitals for critical medicines that is required by the new EMA mandate for the European Shortages Monitoring Platform (ESMP)?
4. What system exists in your national hospitals to collect medication demand (planned stock and available stock)?
5. How do you plan to consolidate demand data from hospitals to be reported into the European Shortages Monitoring Platform (ESMP)?
6. How prepared are your hospitals to supply real-time and accurate data on the planned and available stocks of critical medicines for ESMP?
7. Would you be in favour of investments from your government to digitalise medication management in hospitals for real-time and accurate stock visibility by the Medicines Shortages Single Point of Contact (SPOC)?
8. According to the EMA, the deployment of Electronic Product Information (ePI) can support the management, and mitigation, of medication shortages in hospitals. How will the use of ePI in hospitals support your agency in collecting data on medication stocks and demand in hospitals for the ESMP?