EAHP news

EAHP’s COVID-19 Report showcases the contributions of hospital pharmacists and shares recommendations

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The COVID-19 Report of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) outlines how both the Association and its members across Europe contributed to combating the pandemic. As experts in medications, hospital pharmacists have been instrumental in ensuring that hospital patients were able to access their medicines. For example, they participated in and supported vaccination campaigns across Europe, engaged in the development of clinical trials and carried out pharmacovigilance activities linked to medication interactions in COVID-19 patients. In addition, the hospital pharmacy profession adapted itself to the new normal by further integrating its expertise in multi-professional care teams. For example, hospital pharmacists supported nurses with the preparation of medicines for intensive care units and worked collaboratively with doctors on medication reviews to ensure the best possible therapeutic management for COVID-19 patients.

Besides showcasing the contributions of the hospital pharmacy profession, EAHP’s COVID-19 Report contains several recommendations that will not only help to respond to future health threats but also support the overall activities of the hospital pharmacy service to obtain better outcomes for patients. The recommendations focus on the need for a robust healthcare workforce, addressing medicine shortages, the importance of prospective risk assessment and communication, the value of multidisciplinary collaboration, the need for pharmacy specialisation programmes and the recognition of the role of hospital pharmacists in multi-professional care teams and vaccination campaigns.

Reflecting on the past 2 years during which hospital pharmacists supported efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, EAHP President András Süle underlined: “The roles of our profession have expanded tremendously. Hospital pharmacists engage more in multi-disciplinarily teams and have become more visible on wards through an increased provision of clinical services. This momentum needs to be used to ensure that our profession remains one of the key players in the delivery of care to patients across Europe. In particular, I hope that the recommendation contained in EAHP’s COVID-19 Report will be a step toward ensuring a high degree of safety and quality during times of crisis due to the contributions of hospital pharmacists – as valued members of the interprofessional healthcare team – that can and should play an integral role, focusing on medication management, medication reconciliation, preventive care and patient education.”

EAHP GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS POSITION ON ATMPs

Last month the members of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) came together for their annual General Assembly. Like every year, EAHP’s 35 member associations discussed and approved new position papers developed for the profession. The Position Paper on Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products was one of three that was adopted by EAHP’s General Assembly.

Advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs) are innovative and complex medicines used to treat a variety of human health issues. Areas of application include, but are not limited to, cancers, neuro-degenerative diseases, inherited diseases and autoimmune diseases. In particular, patients suffering from severe, rare or chronic diseases might benefit in the future from the growing use of ATMPs. Hospital pharmacists are responsible for ensuring the safe and effective use of medicines. This expertise of the pharmacy workforce should be a central component to adequate delivery of ATMPs within hospitals. Their participation is not only invaluable in clinical trials for ATMPs where they are responsible for the correct receipt, storage, distribution and control of the clinical trial drug, but also for routine clinical practice.

Since the use of ATMPs for the treatment of disease and injury is growing, EAHP adopted a position paper on this topic that outlines the roles and responsibilities of hospital pharmacists in the handling of ATMPs, addresses their education and training in relation to these products and provides insights on the assessment of ATMPs and pharmacoeconomics.

In its position paper, EAHP

► states that the management of ATMPs, as licensed medications, is the responsibility of the hospital pharmacist.

► urges competent authorities across Europe to use the best practices and outcomes gathered by the Special Interest Group focused on hospital pharmacist’s preparedness for in-vivo gene therapy medicinal products.

► recommends the rapid development of European education and training materials in collaboration with scientific societies for healthcare professionals covering the entire ATMP spectrum.

► calls on pharmacy schools and professional bodies offering continuing education to integrate training of pharmacists on ATMPs into their curricula and training programmes.

► recognises the importance of further promoting the information sharing and communication on ATMPs towards patients and patient organisations.

► reminds national competent authorities to recognise the invaluable role of hospital pharmacists in regard to the assessment of ATMPs and pharmacoeconomics.

EAHP JOINS THE HERA CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

Last month, EAHP joined the newly established HERA Civil Society Forum as one of its members. The Civil Society Forum was set up to provide regular input on the views and opinions of civil society stakeholders to HERA. EAHP is among the 23 organisations that were selected to represent patients, consumers and healthcare professionals.

The first virtual meeting at the end of June focused on gathering the views of participants on the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis and the role of HERA in the response, the state of preparedness of the EU for future health emergencies and the priorities of HERA for 2023.

The Civil Society Forum is part of HERA’s governance structure that also includes an Advisory Forum, bringing together HERA and the technically competent bodies in the Member States, and the Joint Industrial Cooperation Forum (JICF)
that was set up as a subgroup of HERA's Advisory Forum to support collaboration with health-related industrial ecosystems in the area of preparedness and response to health crises.

**STUDENT SCIENCE AWARD: SIGN UP FOR THE WEBINAR!**

EAHP is proud to announce the opening of the next round of the EAHP-EPSA Student Science Award. This prestigious prize recognises and honours the best scientific research authored by a pharmacy student or recent graduate. Since 2011 the EAHP-EPSA Student Science Award is offered in collaboration with the European Pharmaceutical Students' Association (EPSA) to a student who has conducted research in the field of hospital and/or clinical pharmacy.

To enter the competition, students and recent graduates are encouraged to attend the webinar “How to write an abstract”, hosted by EAHP’s Director of Professional Development Claudia Plesan and EAHP Vice President Darija Kuruc Poje. The webinar will take place on the eighth of September 2022 from 5.30 to 6.30 pm CEST.

After the webinar, participating students and recent graduates can obtain detailed feedback on their work prior to submitting their final abstract by 15th November 2022. The abstracts are reviewed in accordance with the criteria of innovation, originality, and contribution to the development of hospital pharmacy. The author of the winning abstract will receive a complimentary registration to the 27th Congress of EAHP, including the coverage of travel and accommodation expenses (up to 500 Euros), as well as official recognition at the EAHP Congress closing ceremony on the 24th of March 2023.

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