

Answer to the Roadmap “Pharmaceutical Strategy - Timely patient access to affordable medicines”

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12421-Pharmaceutical-Strategy-Timely-patient-access-to-affordable-medicines/F535768>

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Statement: 3993 characters max (incl. spaces) (4.000 max).

ECHAMP fully supports this initiative. We recommend that the new strategy also acknowledges the contribution that the industry for homeopathic and anthroposophic medicinal products can make towards achieving a forward-looking EU Pharmaceutical Strategy that balances curative treatments with preventive care, including appropriate self-medication.

Homeopathy is the third most popular specific complementary medicine, used in 100 countries globally (*WHO*); homeopathic medicinal products have long-standing use in most EU Member States and have been widely used in primary and clinical care across Europe for decades. More than one in five Europeans use homeopathy for their health care. 70% of users experience improvements in their health, choosing these medicines because of their safety profile. The growing use of homeopathic medicines is consistent with the trend towards integrative health care; they also offer a solution for self-management of minor health conditions, in line with the trend towards self-care.

In its report on access to medicines (2018/C 263/02), the European Parliament demands that patients ‘have access to the healthcare and treatment options of their choice... including complementary and alternative therapies and medicines’. EU citizens expect to benefit from equal access to safe therapies, both new and established. Homeopathic medicinal products have a long-standing, solid legal framework in European pharmaceutical legislation, supported by high quality standards as defined in the European Pharmacopoeia. The current regulatory framework serves the patients’ needs in this area, striking a balance between ensuring the quality and safety of these products, while at the same time giving citizens access to the medicines of their choice.

Traditional and complementary medicine is described by WHO as ‘an important and often underestimated health resource’. Homeopathic medicinal products have a role to play in the face of major health challenges and the rising burden of diseases in the EU. They offer valuable treatment options in support of EU health policy goals on multimorbidity, polypharmacy, chronic diseases and an ageing population. They can contribute to safe and effective strategies to reduce the use of antibiotics. A growing body of scientific research, including published clinical studies, demonstrates the effectiveness of these forms of treatment.

Traditional and complementary medicine has a valuable role to play alongside conventional medicine systems in tackling the unique health challenges that Europe is now facing. The full potential of traditional and complementary medicine must be explored and exploited, reducing any unnecessary burden on health systems at a time when resources are already



stretched. In this context, these medicinal products offer cost-effective options that contribute to the financial sustainability of healthcare systems.

A future strategy for real world data will help to improve understanding of treatment outcomes for existing complementary products, leading to better decisions on the role they can play in meeting patients' needs.

This is an EU-based industry that has been serving the European market for decades and the EU is the global centre of expertise in manufacturing, quality standards and regulation of this industry. The products have a negligible impact on the environment, due to low intrinsic toxicity of the majority of the substances processed. Many manufacturers promote organic farming for their source materials, fostering biodiversity and optimising the use of natural resources throughout their supply chain.

A truly holistic, patient-centred, forward-looking Pharmaceutical Strategy will combine the best of the established therapies with the new, through the conscious integration of pluralism into the EU healthcare system, ensuring that patients and health professionals have access to a wide choice of reliable, high-quality medicinal products, including homeopathic medicines.