

## European Parliament calls for new rules to improve access to medicines

Brussels, 2 March 2017. The European Public Health Alliance welcomes the report on access to medicines adopted by the European Parliament Plenary this morning. The Parliament's own initiative report addresses the challenge posed to national healthcare budgets by high medicines prices charged by drug manufacturers and puts forward a series of recommendations to help Europeans benefit from better and more affordable medicines.

The Parliament's position today echoes the key messages in the [groundbreaking](#) Council Conclusions of June 2016 as well as the [recent](#) UN High Level Panel report on Access to Medicines. Parliament has sent clear messages to the European Commission to:

- a) Critically look at the abuse of the intellectual property-related incentives enshrined in the European orphan drugs legislation,
- b) Guarantee that early access schemes such as the [controversial](#) adaptive pathways project of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) remain the exception and
- c) Work towards a [robust](#) Health Technology Assessment (HTA) system which prioritises genuine therapeutic advance.

The European Parliament acknowledges the significant role of public funding into medical research and development (R&D) and calls on national governments and the European Commission to guarantee that Europeans do not pay twice for their medicines. The European Parliament calls for complete and unconditional transparency in the area of R&D costs for medicines.

Yannis Natsis of EPHA commented: "*This position of the European Parliament demonstrates clearly that political discussion of how to tackle the unjustifiably high prices of medicines is here to stay. We particularly welcome the Parliament's calls for proper enforcement of competition rules in the pharmaceutical sector, as drug manufacturers may profit from the absence of the forces of robust competition, leading to higher prices and cutting some patients off from treatment.*"

EPHA will actively collaborate with all key stakeholders to follow-up on the recommendations of the report and make better medicines an accessible reality for more patients in Europe.

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### Notes for editors:

[Legislative Observatory on the INI report on access to medicines](#)

[June 2016 EU Health Council Conclusions \(EPSCO\) on strengthening the balance in the pharmaceutical systems in the EU and its Member States](#)

[United Nations High Level Panel Report on Access to Medicines](#)

**ABOUT EPHA** The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), and the Better Regulation Watchdog. <http://www.epha.org/>