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## PRESS RELEASE

### Moving from agreed principles to good practice and positive change across Europe Can the Pharmaceutical Forum deliver for Patients?

**This was THE question in a major European Conference co-organised by the European Commission and the European Patients' Forum taking place today in Brussels - the answer was a resounding "yes"!**

The Pharmaceutical Forum was a three year process involving the Commission, the Member States and representatives from other stakeholders to explore the future of pharmaceuticals in terms of "information to patients", pricing and reimbursement and relative effectiveness. A number of very important principles and practical tools in each of these areas were developed during that period that creates **a new dynamic between equity of access, cost containment and reward for innovation**. The conclusions and recommendations from the Pharmaceutical Forum received political endorsement during a high level ministerial meeting in October 08.

Today's conference convened 130 patient organisation leaders and other health stakeholders from across the European Union to explore critically the outcomes of the Pharmaceutical Forum and how to use these effectively from European to local level.

This Conference was a key milestone in moving forward on the achievements of the Pharmaceutical Forum. It enabled participants to share knowledge on the tangible outcomes of the Forum and to examine in very concrete terms how the conclusions and recommendations of the Pharmaceutical Forum could and should be translated into reality by the whole range of stakeholders in their own organisations and in their own contexts.

The representative of the European Commission stated that *"this conference showed that Europe has the potential to involve all key actors, and primarily patients, in a crucial reflection on pharmaceuticals within the clinical pathway, to ensure better access to treatments, stronger health information and sustainable national healthcare budgets. According to the representative of the European Commission, patients proved with this event that, in addition to be the beneficiaries of public health systems, they are also the drivers for change in all constituencies. Such commitments from a key member of the Pharmaceutical Forum was needed for Europe"*.

#### **Patient Empowerment: quality information, equity of access and affordability**

EPF President Anders Olauson added *"We would urge all those involved to maintain the political momentum achieved through the Pharmaceutical Forum for sustained and tangible cooperation. Our sense is that despite the success of the Pharmaceutical Forum, there is still much to achieve. The Conclusions and Recommendations cannot be purely a "statement of intent" but must become real action and real policy. Patients throughout Europe want empowerment and independence, through quality information, equity of access to treatments and therapies and affordability. As the voice of patients across the European Union, we call on continued leadership, vision and ambition in both the political and practical follow –up to the Pharmaceutical Forum. And we, as the umbrella body representing patients' organisations across the European Union are full committed to taking our responsibilities in this process."*

#### **For more information contact**

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#### **Notes for the editor**

More information on the pharmaceutical forum process : <http://ec.europa.eu/pharmaforum/>

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