



**Press note
30 March 2009**

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and EuroPharm Forum step up collaboration on pharmacy practice for mental health, obesity and palliative care and acknowledge the role of pharmacists in health systems

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and EuroPharm Forum will join efforts to support organizations of European pharmacists in developing the best practice models. The models will provide practical and cost-effective examples that can be used in chronic diseases, mental disorders, obesity, palliative care and other sectors. Together with WHO, the EuroPharm Forum will develop and make these models available to all countries through its Observatory on Pharmacy Practice.

Today, at the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen, the EuroPharm Forum and the Regional Office signed a memorandum of understanding detailing their agreement to work more closely in developing accessible resources for pharmacists in the WHO European Region. The overall objective is to help them in developing services and skills to increasingly meet patients' needs.

WHO and the EuroPharm Forum recognize that pharmacists have been faced with increasing health demands that extend beyond selling medicine. Pharmacists have a vital role to play in efforts to provide safe and effective medicines, helping to ensure the best treatment for patients and save lives. The memorandum of understanding aims at strengthening this role.

Quotes from the signing ceremony:

By signing the memorandum of understanding, Dr Nata Menabde, WHO Deputy Regional Director for Europe, and Dick Tromp, EuroPharm Forum President, have agreed to continue the collaboration between their organizations. They have also agreed that further discussions will take place as a matter of course to define and develop additional areas of collaboration for the future.

“Pharmacists are an integral part of the health system. They assume varied functions ranging from procuring and supplying medicines to pharmaceutical care services, helping to ensure the best treatment for patients”, said Dr Nata Menabde. “Sharing the best practice models will allow us to make better use of resources and have a greater impact on pharmacies' role in public health.”

Dr Menabde also emphasized: “The agreement we have signed today brings our cooperation with the EuroPharm Forum to a new level. It demonstrates that this cooperation is important to us. The WHO Regional Office for Europe aims to focus attention on health issues on all levels, and the contribution of pharmacists is a very important part of health in many contexts.”

Dick Tromp expressed satisfaction that the memorandum of understanding could be established: “We have a long-standing tradition of working very closely with WHO Regional Office for Europe for the benefit of our members. With the signing of this memorandum, we affirm the value of this partnership and set the stage for future joint activities. The close collaboration with WHO is important, since it emphasizes the pharmacist's role in health care.”

Photos from the signing ceremony are available at:
http://www.euro.who.int/MediaCentre/PR/2009/20090330_2

More information about the WHO European programme on health technologies and pharmaceuticals is available at <http://www.euro.who.int/pharmaceuticals>.

About EuroPharm Forum

EuroPharm Forum is a joint network of professional associations of pharmacists from countries in the WHO European Region. It was founded in January 1992. The Forum seeks to strengthen all aspects of pharmacists' contributions to the health of the European populations, and its programmes are directed primarily towards promoting health and improving the management of illness.

More information about the EuroPharm Forum is available at <http://www.europharmforum.org>.

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