

Thank you Chair, dear Mr(s) Regional Director, dear delegates

First of all, I want to congratulate the incoming Regional Director on being elected in this new position.

As president of the EuroPharm Forum, I represent the European Professional Pharmacy Associations, and I like to express our sincere support to you, WHO Europe.

Last year, the Tallinn Charter was accepted and as a response to this major event, the members of the EuroPharm Forum have accepted a declaration called "Pharmacists improving people's health". We have offered this declaration to Deputy Regional Director Dr Nata Menabde.

We are very much aware of workforce problems and the code of practice.

I would like to describe two approaches:

- 1 Making existing systems more efficient.
- 2 Developing an analysis and recommendations about the global, unbalanced situation.

Ad 1

Pharmacists can make a change and help in the area of medication and medicines' use. Many problems occur in the domain of medicines' use and this leads to bad health outcomes and economical burden.

Pharmacists can offer support and do already offer support in the health care arena, for instance in public health, in the treatment of long term conditions, especially in the chronically ill elderly by reducing risks and by responding to patients' needs.

In public health we see many pharmacists active in obesity programmes, in smoking cessation support, and in early detection of for instance diabetes, hypertension and hypercholesterolemia.

Patients suffering from long term conditions are protected against mistakes in prescribing and use, by Medication Therapy Management (in French Opinion Pharmaceutique) and by Mediation Review activities. These patients need also extra support in adherence and rational drug use by proper advising and coaching. We pharmacists do provide these services and pharmaceutical care.

From research, we know that many medicine users are admitted to hospital due to inappropriate use of medication. These hospital admissions can be avoided, and in a number of countries, pharmacists are active in reducing these risks by professional intervention programmes.

By increasing the level of collaboration in the primary health care team, pharmacists can help make a difference. The aforementioned, undesired problems will occur less frequently; rational drug use will elevate; health, wealth and wellbeing will be increased and costs will be cut.

Pharmacists in Europe do already take these actions, but would like to be supported so that their professionalism will be better utilised in order to improve the existing health care system.

Ad 2

The EuroPharm Forum is part of a global family of pharmacist associations. The International Pharmaceutical Federation, FIP, has recently (September 2009) launched a second report about Workforce (http://www.fip.org/www/?page=menu_resourcesforhealth), and I invite you to study the materials. This report focuses on the unbalanced situation in workforce globally, and it offers a number of recommendations.

I know that we can help the WHO in the creation, development and utilisation of better health care systems.

Thank you.

Dr ThFJ Tromp
President, EuroPharm Forum