

Sharing among pharmacists boosts new services in southern european pharmacies

Community pharmacists from Portugal, Spain, France, and Italy gathered this Friday in Porto for another edition of the Jornada Farmácia Latina, organized this year (2024) by the Portuguese Pharmaceutical Society (OF) and the National Association of Pharmacies (ANF).

Present at the opening of the event, the president of the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU), Aris Prins, outlined the main points of PGEU's involvement in the revision process of European pharmaceutical legislation.

"The ongoing reform of the European Union's pharmaceutical legislation is a unique opportunity to shape the future of pharmaceutical regulation. We must actively participate to ensure that the outcome aligns with the best interests of our patients and our profession. We must ensure that the reform helps build a more resilient supply chain and improves the prevention, monitoring, and management of medicine shortages, and more broadly, enhances patient access to safe and affordable medicines, regardless of where they live in Europe," said the PGEU president.

Throughout the event, representatives from each country presented their respective developments in Community Pharmacy practice, including the provision of new pharmaceutical services and the implementation of best practices.

The president of the OF, Helder Mota Filipe, discussed regulatory developments in pharmaceutical practice in Portugal. These include changes to the OF Statutes and pharmaceutical acts, as well as the legislative framework enabling the dispensing of hospital medicines through community pharmacies, the renewal of therapy for chronic patients, and intervention in minor clinical situations, as outlined in this year's State Budget.

The Portuguese representative emphasized the importance of continuous professional development and presented the model for developing new pharmaceutical competencies in areas such as Oncology, Clinical Research and Public Health, Pharmaceutical Medicine, and Health Management.

"Permanent dialogue with these countries, where the pharmacist's role is quite similar, is essential. Our agendas are closely aligned, and it is important to reinforce this message with the Health Ministers of our countries," explained the president.

The president of ANF, Ema Paulino, shared with European partners the recent experience of integrating pharmacies into the seasonal vaccination campaign against flu and COVID-19, a service contracted with the National Health Service (SNS) and remunerated for the first time to the involved agents: wholesalers and community pharmacies. "More than 70% of the vaccines were administered in pharmacies, with very positive results in terms of population adherence and satisfaction," she added.

Ema Paulino also highlighted the measures already approved by the Portuguese Government regarding the renewal of chronic therapy and the local dispensing of hospital medication, as examples of the potential of pharmacist and pharmacy intervention in people's health journeys.

At the end of the meeting, the European partners acknowledged the evolution of pharmacist intervention in Portugal, with new services developed in coordination with the National Health Service, helping to relieve pressure on public health services and contributing to the sustainability of health systems in the countries.