



# **Medicines in Portugal: Better Access & Independent Information**

**HAI-Europe Workshop  
15 – 16 October 2009**

**Hotel Fenix Lisboa, Praça Marquês de Pombal 8  
Lisbon, Portugal**



Executive  
Agency for  
Health and  
Consumers

This arises from the Developing Rational Use of Medicines in Europe project, which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Health programme



## **Medicines in Portugal: Better Access & Independent Information**

### ***Issues & Advocacy on Medicines' Reimbursement*** **15 October 2009 Workshop Programme**

*Morning* Dr. Sabine Vogler, Austrian Health Institute:  
"Portugal's Reimbursement System: Critical assessment of the access of essential medicines"

10:00 – 10:40 The Portuguese reimbursement system - an overview on key characteristics (presentation)

10:40 – 11:00 Criteria for assessing a reimbursement system (presentation + discussion)

11:00 – 11:30 Assessing the reimbursement system (discussion)

11:30 – 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 – 12:45 Assessing the reimbursement system (group work)

12:45 – 13:00 Recommendations & the way forward (presentation + discussion)

13:00 – 14:30 Buffet Lunch provided

*Afternoon* Health Action International - Europe:  
"Advocacy on Medicines' Issues: How to Carry the Message Forward"

14:30 – 15:15 What is advocacy? Building an advocacy network (presentation + discussion)

15:15 – 16:00 Advocacy strategy: Identifying medicines' issues (group work)

16:00 – 16:15 Coffee break

16:15 – 17:00 Mobilising for action (presentation + group work)

17:00 – 17:30 Executing your action plan and next steps (presentation + discussion)



## **Medicines in Portugal: Better Access & Independent Information**

### ***Best Practices in Unbiased Medicines' Information*** **16 October 2009 Workshop Programme**

*Afternoon* Teresa Alves, HAI Europe Coordinator: [“The need for independent information”](#)

14.00 – 14:10 Welcome and introduction with video

14.10 – 14:35 Best practices in medicines information in Europe

14:35 – 15:45 Selection of best practice solutions for Portugal (group exercises and plenary discussion)

15.45 – 16:00 Coffee break

16:00 – 16:25 Dr. Juan Erviti, International Society of Drug Bulletins: [“Setting up an Independent Drug Bulletin”](#)

16.25 – 17:45 Critical appraisal of promotional information (group exercises and plenary discussion)

17:45 – 18.00 Closing and cocktail reception



## Workshop Rationale

### ***Issues & Advocacy on Medicines' Reimbursement Lisbon, Portugal***

The Portuguese National Health System (the SNS) includes a medicines' reimbursement system that covers the whole population. Under this system, the cost of the medicine is usually shared between the State and the patient. In some circumstances, the entire cost of the medicine is paid by the State.

The price a patient pays for a prescription medicine (co-payment) is dependent on the patient's condition/disease, the need of the patient to have that medicine for his or her daily function, and the patient's social-economic situation.

#### *Medicine prices in Portugal are still too high*

Essential medicines for the treatment of serious diseases amount to nearly half of all reimbursed medicines. Patients taking these medicines must pay 31% of the product's price, which can be a considerable amount.

In spite of this universal reimbursement system, a patient survey from 2007 shows that 40% of people had some difficulty affording their medicines and another 12% found the medicines they had been prescribed too expensive to buy.

#### *Advocating for improved access to medicines*

This workshop aims to enhance access to medicines in Portugal through improvements in the medicines reimbursement system. Workshop participants will gain:

- A greater understanding of reimbursement issues, including:
  - An introduction to the Portuguese reimbursement system
  - A discussion about challenges to the implementation of access to essential medicines based on the analysis conducted by the Austrian Health Institute
- Practical guidance on how to organise an advocacy campaign on reimbursement issues at the national level, including:
  - Analysing situations, stakeholders, and audiences
  - Developing messages and ways to use messages in the media
  - Planning advocacy



## Workshop Rationale

### ***Best Practices in Unbiased Medicines' Information*** **Lisbon, Portugal**

Health information is a fundamental and necessary part of healthcare. However, the development of direct to consumer advertising (DTCA), disease awareness (or “disease mongering”) campaigns, “compliance programs”, and direct and indirect pharmaceutical industry support of patient organisations have blurred the boundaries between drug promotion and health information. If patients and consumers are to be able to make informed choices about their health, there needs to be a clear distinction between information and advertising that is disguised as “information”.

Relevant health information should be:

- *reliable*: evidence based (listing data sources), unbiased, and up-to-date, with full transparency on authorship and financing (enabling rejection of information influenced by conflicts of interests);
- *comparative*: presenting benefits and harms of the full range of available treatment options (including, where appropriate, the option not to treat), together with an explanation of the natural history of the disease, or condition; and
- *adapted to users*: understandable, accessible, and culturally sensitive.

Currently, there are many sources of relevant health information for the public both in Europe and internationally. This workshop will investigate one such example of a national independent drug bulletin. Other specific tools have been developed to assess and rate the quality of health information. The aim of these tools is to help both information providers and users to ensure accuracy, quality and relevance to health care choices. This workshop will include many examples of quality assessment tools and information sources provided by health authorities, medical product agencies, healthcare assessment agencies, health care providers, health professionals, consumers’ organisations and independent patient groups.



## Workshop Facilitators

### *Issues & Advocacy on Medicines' Reimbursement* Lisbon, Portugal

#### **Dr. Sabine Vogler**

Sabine is a senior researcher at the Health Economics Department, in particular on the analysis of health care systems (Europe and beyond) with a focus on pharmaceuticals, i.e. pricing and reimbursement, rational use of medicines, distribution of pharmaceuticals. She has in-deep knowledge due to more than 10 years of research experience in these areas. She has been the project coordinator of various projects at national and at EU level (including PPRI, <http://ppri.oebig.at> and PHIS, <http://phis.goeg.at>). Furthermore she has been invited to various high level workshops and meetings as an expert in the field of pharmaceutical pricing and reimbursement. She has published several studies and is an appreciated speaker at conferences.

Organisation: Austrian Health Institute / Gesundheit Österreich GmbH / Österreichisches Bundesinstitut für Gesundheitswesen (GÖG/ÖBIG), Vienna, Austria

Contact: [Sabine.vogler@goeg.at](mailto:Sabine.vogler@goeg.at)

#### **Katrina Perehudoff**

Katrina Perehudoff was introduced to essential medicines issues at the WHO while conducting research on the constitutional right to health and essential medicines. After graduating from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Free University of Amsterdam) with a Masters Degree in International Public Health, Katrina gained experience in EU health policy fora. She is now a Project Officer at Health Action International-Europe, where she manages two projects - an investigation of the influence of corporate interests on European patient groups and a separate advocacy-oriented project on best practices in national medicines' reimbursement systems.

Organisation: Health Action International – Europe, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Contact: [Katrina@haiweb.org](mailto:Katrina@haiweb.org)



## Workshop Facilitators

### *Best Practices in Unbiased Medicines' Information* Lisbon, Portugal

#### **Teresa Leonardo Alves**

Throughout her studies at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Porto, Portugal, Teresa became involved in the student association movement, at local, national and international levels. Her subsequent career placements were connected to pharmacy and public health issues and as a result, she became particularly interested in topics related to rational drug use and health policies. Teresa completed a Public Health Masters at the Netherlands Institute of Health Sciences, Rotterdam, in 2006, where she conducted a research project assessing the extent and variation of self-reported polypharmacy in Europe. In 2006, she joined Health Action International (HAI)- an independent network working to increase access to essential medicines and their rational use through research excellence and evidence-based advocacy – first as European campaigns officer and later as Coordinator for the European office. Teresa is currently reading for a PhD on Medicines' Information to Patients and Consumers at the Faculty of Sciences, School of Pharmacy, University of Utrecht in The Netherlands.

Organisation: Health Action International – Europe, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Contact: [Teresa@haiweb.org](mailto:Teresa@haiweb.org)

#### **Dr. Juan Erviti**

Juan Erviti is a qualified hospital pharmacist and earned his doctorate at the University of Navarre, Spain. In 1992, he worked as an assistant professor of Pharmacology in the Public University of Navarre and, from 1994 to 2003, joined the National Health System where he worked as a drug advisor to doctors. In 2003, he was appointed as the head of the Drug Information Unit in the Navarre Regional Health Service in Spain. He is the coordinator of the Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin of Navarre, Spain, and vice-president of the Navarre Clinical Trials Committee as well. Currently he is a member of the International Society of Drug Bulletins (ISDB) Committee. He has published over twenty articles on pharmacotherapy and collaborated in different projects on pharmacoepidemiology research.

Organisation: International Society of Drug Bulletins, Spain

Contact: [Juan.erviti.lopez@cfnavarra.es](mailto:Juan.erviti.lopez@cfnavarra.es)



## Workshop Evaluation

### *Issues & Advocacy on Medicines' Reimbursement* Lisbon, Portugal

#### Content

- i. The workshop delivered important, new information:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, what information were you already familiar with?

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- ii. The workshop delivered relevant information:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, what information did you find irrelevant/not applicable, and why?

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#### Facilitators and Speakers

- i. They were knowledgeable on the topics:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

- ii. They communicated effectively:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

- iii. They encouraged questions, and group participation:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

- iv. How could the facilitators improve for the future?



## Structure

i. There was sufficient time to cover all topics of interest:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, which important topics did you feel were not covered adequately? How could this be improved for the future (e.g. spend less time on another aspect of the workshop)?

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ii. There was sufficient time for interaction and peer learning:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

iii. Group exercises and discussions made a significant contribution to the workshop:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

## Overall

i. The workshop was useful:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

Was there any aspect of the workshop that you felt was less useful? If yes, please describe:

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ii. My expectations of this workshop were (*please select one*):      Exceeded      Met      Not Met

If the workshop did not meet your expectations, please describe:

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iii. In order to help us improve this workshop for the future, please provide additional comments:

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## Workshop Evaluation

### *Best Practices in Unbiased Medicines' Information* Lisbon, Portugal

#### Content

iv. The workshop delivered important, new information:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, what information were you already familiar with?

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v. The workshop delivered relevant information:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, what information did you find irrelevant/not applicable, and why?

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#### Facilitators and Speakers

v. They were knowledgeable on the topics:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

vi. They communicated effectively:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

vii. They encouraged questions, and group participation:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

viii. How could the facilitators improve for the future?



### Structure

iii. There was sufficient time to cover all topics of interest:

Strongly disagree      Disagree      No Opinion / Not Applicable      Agree      Strongly Agree

If you disagree, which important topics did you feel were not covered adequately? How could this be improved for the future (e.g. spend less time on another aspect of the workshop)?

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If the workshop did not meet your expectations, please describe:

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vi. In order to help us improve this workshop for the future, please provide additional comments:

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