



Call for Common European Drug Database (CEDD) pilot project partners

1. Project goals and objectives

The European Union Legislation made a major contribution to the achievement of the objective of the free and safe movement of medicinal products for human use and the elimination of obstacles to trade such products. Despite of these achievements there are huge differences in prices among the Member States, mainly but not exclusively on the off-patented markets of pharmaceuticals. Moreover it seems that the present reimbursement policies in many of the Member States neutralise generic competition which results in higher prices of pharmaceuticals and therefore means a great loss of health benefit for European citizens. Patients and European Health Insurers cannot exploit the advantages that the size of the common, internal European pharmaceutical market could offer.

The Second Progress Report of the Pharmaceutical Forum emphasises the importance of creating the right environment for price competition. This document points out that authorities need to provide for a flexible, adaptive pricing system to ensure savings. Competition generates savings for the health-care systems and is a major stimulation to innovation.

The Transparency Directive (Directive 89/105/EEC) Article 6 (4) requires that Member States publish in appropriate publication and communicate to the Commission a complete list of the products covered by their health insurance system, together with their prices fixed by the national competent authorities.

Although the required data are submitted to the Commission and published on the websites of health care authorities of the Member States, the public access to all the national lists of reimbursed products is still obstructed due to language barriers and the lack of standard data structure, therefore this source cannot be used for international reference pricing to encourage the price competition among the suppliers. The international reference pricing is practised more or less in every member states, but it is quite complicated to get credible data on updated price information of the products in different countries and it is not easy to carry out a systematic comparison.

To accomplish our aims in accordance with the concept of the Transparency Directive a Common European Drug Database (CEDD) should be set up containing the current prices of reimbursed pharmaceuticals of all Member States. The CEDD would be capable to offer simple and transparent IT tools to compare the drug prices in different countries.

To accomplish these aims the Hungarian National Health Insurance Fund Administration (OEP) is going to construct a website to make European prices publicly available for other international agencies as well, and to make price comparison possible for health care authorities all over Europe in framework of a pilot project. We consider that the international price referencing on transparent methodology and updated comprehensive price information could result in a more competitive, common European pharmaceutical market, which would mean a great health benefit for European citizens and a stimulation to European innovation.

2. Project Deliverables

The project is based on the standardisation of the national drug databases and therefore the co-operation of Member States is indispensable. OEP will do the standardisation for the first few countries sending their data of drugs to the below mentioned email addresses in accordance with the attached record-structure in the framework of the pilot project.



Please find attached (in the excel sheet) the record structure required for connecting various drug databases. Fill in so many columns as you can, according to the examples in the enclosed data sheet. You may not have all the data but it is not unconditionally a problem. It is very important to fill in the first column (product ID) which should be the product specific IDs of your own database: it will enable you to connect your database with the database that OEP creates. Please send back data table in xls; dbf; or mdb format to email addresses mentioned below.

Although OEP will work out the standards needed to connect all the national databases all contributions are welcomed. For details and the sample of the deliverable of the project, please look at the attached Power Point Presentation.

3. Project timetable

The initial version of the **website will start in April 2008** and it will contain the prices of all reimbursed products of the pilot countries. After establishing the basic background of the website, OEP would like to extend the project to all Member States after the evaluation of the pilot project **in June 2008**.

To accomplish the starting date of the website we would like that you send your database until **15 March 2008**.

4. Project funding

Initially in the pilot project phase we do not use any outside funding, we are going to use our own resources. After evaluating the pilot project we would like to ask for European Union funding to extend and to maintain the project in a framework of the common project application with the other participating countries.

5. Participating countries

Hungary – National Health Insurance Fund (OEP), project management

Invited countries in the pilot project (not confirmed):

Portugal – INFARMED

Ireland

Finland

Slovenia

6. List of contact persons and participating experts

For further information please contact Mr Tamas Kovacs (kovacs.tam@oep.hu) and Mr Gergely Nemeth (nemeth.ger@oep.hu), Mr. Szabolcs Szigeti (szigeti.sz@oep.hu).

Budapest, 9 April 2008.