



PRESS RELEASE

14 November 2019

European community pharmacists call for action to reduce the impact of pharmaceuticals in the environment

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European association representing more than 400,000 community pharmacists.

PGEU's members are the national associations and professional bodies of pharmacists in 32 European countries, including EU Member States, EEA/EFTA members and EU applicant countries.

For more information, please visit the PGEU website www.pgeu.eu or contact pharmacy@pgeu.eu



PGEU GPUE

Following the publication of the European Commission [Communication on a European Union Strategic Approach to Pharmaceuticals in the Environment](#) in March 2019, community pharmacists reinforce their commitment to reduce and prevent the impact of pharmaceuticals in the environment.

PGEU President Michal Byliniak said: “Community pharmacists across Europe share the increasing concerns on the negative effects pharmaceuticals can cause on the environment, and as a result, on public and animal health. As medicines experts they are well placed to increase public awareness, promote the prudent use and correct disposal of pharmaceuticals, and provide advice on the availability of ‘greener’ pharmaceuticals where such information is available.”

To reduce and prevent the negative impact of pharmaceuticals in the environment, [PGEU asks:](#)

1. Member States, in close collaboration with the European Commission and the European Medicines Agency (EMA), to:
 - a. Take action to increase public awareness on the prudent use and waste collection of pharmaceuticals.
 - b. Develop guidelines and information materials for healthcare professionals on the prudent use of pharmaceuticals.
 - c. Explore the inclusion of environmental aspects for pharmaceuticals posing a risk to or via the environment in the training of pharmacy students and continuous professional development programmes as part of a One Health approach.
 - d. Develop and ensure compliance with environmental quality standards for pharmaceuticals as a measure to promote greener manufacturing.
 - e. Ensure appropriate funding of pharmacy-led disposal and collection schemes for medicines, where implemented
 - f. Reduce pharmaceutical waste caused by leftover medicines by ensuring that systems are in place that encourage the dispensing of quantities of certain risk medicines matching the duration of treatment as much as possible.
2. The European Commission to:
 - a. Ensure that actions to address the risk of pharmaceuticals in the environment do not jeopardise independent clinical decision-making by healthcare professionals on public health grounds.
 - b. Foster best-practice exchanges between Member States on measures addressing the negative impact of pharmaceuticals in the environment.
 - c. Fund and encourage more research to fill current existing knowledge gaps on the potential negative impact of pharmaceuticals on the environment as well as the links between the presence of antimicrobials in the environment and the development and spread of antimicrobial resistance.
 - d. Encourage action in third countries where pharmaceutical emissions from manufacturing and other sources are suspected of contributing to the global spread of antimicrobial resistance.