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NEWSLETTER
May 2018



[Profession's service to global health showcased in FIP's annual report](#)
>More



[Welsh government calls for change to antipsychotic prescribing in care homes](#)
>More

SUMMARY



FIP NEWS

- [FIP's work highlighted by WHO director general](#)
- [Pharmaceutical profession's service to global health showcased in FIP's annual report](#)
- [New FIP report looks at pharmacists' roles in the supply chain](#)
- [FIP helps draft new pharmacy law in Montenegro](#)
- [New pharmacy schools project to raise awareness of fake medicines](#)
- [Share perspectives on regulation, FIP tells health professions](#)
- [Pharmacists are integral to universal health coverage, FIP tells ministers](#)
- [Generic medicines use is boosted by pharmacists, FIP tells experts at WHO meeting](#)



WORLD NEWS

- [Community pharmacists in England delivered over 1.3m flu vaccines in 2017](#)
- [Australian pharmacists lack supplement knowledge, according to new study](#)
- [Substance that enhances TB treatment discovered](#)
- [Multivitamin may reduce respiratory illnesses in cystic fibrosis patients, study finds](#)
- [Smartphone apps may improve adherence — more research needed](#)



MEMBER ORGANISATION NEWS

- [Adherence to medicines campaign launched \(Brazil\)](#)
- [Pharmacist campaign starts with record participation of pharmacies \(Germany\)](#)
- [Pharmacists to serve on pain management task force \(USA\)](#)
- [UHC requires investment in pharmacy, CPA says \(Commonwealth\)](#)
- [Pharmacists association aims to enhance health service development \(Eritrea\)](#)
- [PSN calls for more family planning roles for community pharmacists \(Nigeria\)](#)
- [Pharmacists offer clinical services on national television \(Brazil\)](#)
- [pharmaSuisse marks 175th anniversary by reflecting on future of profession \(Switzerland\)](#)
- [Pharmacists criticise pro-deregulation report \(Austria\)](#)



WHO NEWS

- [First WHO list of essential diagnostic tests list published](#)
- [Investing in NCDs control generates financial and health gains](#)
- [World Health Assembly delegates agree on new five-year strategic plan](#)



FIP CONGRATULATES...



FIP NEWS

FIP's work highlighted by WHO director general

“Countries with a lower number of pharmacists per capita are more likely to have reduced access to medicines, as pharmacists are needed at every stage of the pharmaceutical supply chain,” Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization, has said in his report on addressing the global shortage of medicines and vaccines presented at the World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland, last week. In particular, the report references FIP’s [“Global pharmacy workforce intelligence: Trends report”](#) and our [Pharmaceutical Workforce Development Goals](#). FIP has been working towards addressing the global shortages of and inadequate access to medicines and vaccines for nearly a decade, and in a [statement](#) to the assembly, we voiced our support for a systematic approach for ensuring the pharmaceutical workforce is corresponding to the local needs in terms of size, competencies, education and performance. FIP also made a statement on pandemic influenza preparedness. Two further statements — on [WHO’s draft 13th general programme of work](#) and [mhealth](#) — were made on

Pharmaceutical profession's service to global health showcased in FIP's annual report

The diverse work of pharmaceutical educators, pharmaceutical scientists and pharmacists, all in the service of global health, is documented in FIP's latest [annual report](#), published today. The report, "Serving global health", highlights the many achievements FIP and its worldwide network of experts and national member organisations made in 2017 and outlines FIP's current areas of work. "Let us be in no doubt that the pharmacy profession has a firm place in the universal health coverage agenda, and there is much more we can offer. It is through working together in the service of global pharmacy that, ultimately, we serve global health," said FIP president Carmen Peña.

New FIP report looks at pharmacists' roles in the supply chain

Inefficient pharmaceutical supply chains are partly to blame for a substantial proportion of the world still being without access to basic life-saving medicines, says a new FIP report, published earlier this month. The report, "[Pharmacists in the supply chain: The role of the medicines expert in ensuring quality and availability](#)", released in a landscape of challenges such as falsified medicines and workforce shortages, gives a global overview of the role of pharmacists in different supply chains in low-, middle- and high-income countries, and describes the evolution of supply chains. The report points out that investment in training and education is needed to strengthen pharmacists' roles in supply chains. It also details the competencies that these roles require. [More>](#)

FIP helps draft new pharmacy law in Montenegro

The drafting of new legislation to regulate community pharmacies in Montenegro received FIP support earlier this month. Policy options, international models and key principles to be considered when drafting the new law were presented by Gonçalo Sousa Pinto, professional development and advocacy manager, FIP, at a consultation hosted by the World Health Organization country office and the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Podgorica, Montenegro. The Pharmaceutical Chamber of Montenegro, an FIP member organisation, was also present at the meeting.

New pharmacy schools project to raise awareness of fake medicines

A new project to raise awareness of substandard and falsified medicines among pharmacists in Sub Saharan Africa had input from FIP when our representatives met Mick Deats, World Health Organization group lead on substandard and falsified medical products, at WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, last week. The project — a collaboration between FIP and the WHO — is set to be piloted in four pharmacy schools. The WHO Global Surveillance and Monitoring System for substandard and falsified medical products has been receiving reports for the past four years, with over 1,600 substandard and falsified medical products reported from 100 countries and almost half coming from the African region.

Share perspectives on regulation, FIP tells health professions

"Professions evolve, and regulations, standards and assessment systems should follow," said Ema Paulino, interim chief executive officer, FIP, at the 2018 World Health Professions Regulation

central element of professional autonomy is the assurance that individual healthcare professionals have the freedom to exercise professional judgement in the care and treatment of patients without undue influence by outside parties or individuals. The conference was hosted by the World Health Professions Alliance, of which FIP is a founding member, and was attended by professionals from 36 countries.

[Pharmacists are integral to universal health coverage, FIP tells ministers](#)

Investment in the development of an adaptable, flexible, competent and well distributed global pharmacy workforce was called for by FIP jointly with the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association at a Commonwealth Health Ministers meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, earlier this month. Evidence demonstrates that increasing the number of pharmacists and employing them in patient-facing roles to manage medicines significantly reduces mortality and morbidity, the two organisations pointed out to ministers.

[Generic medicines use is boosted by pharmacists, FIP tells experts at WHO meeting](#)

“Prescribing by international non-proprietary name (INN) promotes an independent and evidence-based model for treatment selection, with economic savings for payers, while ensuring quality and safety of medicine,” said Gonçalo Sousa Pinto, FIP’s professional development and advocacy manager, at the World Health Organization’s 66th Consultation on International Nonproprietary Names for Pharmaceutical Substances in Geneva, Switzerland, earlier this month. Findings from FIP’s 2017 survey related to INN prescribing and generic substitution, which were published in [“Pharmacy: A global overview — Workforce, medicines distribution, practice, regulation and remuneration 2017”](#), were presented by Mr Sousa Pinto.



WORLD NEWS

[Welsh government calls for change to antipsychotic prescribing in care homes](#)

Care home residents taking dementia medication should receive mandatory three-monthly medication reviews, the National Assembly for Wales’ Health, Social Care and Sport Committee said in a [report](#) published last month. “Cultural and systemic changes are needed to ensure antipsychotic medications are prescribed appropriately, and not as a first option,” said Dai Lloyd, chair of the committee. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines state that patients with dementia experiencing non-cognitive symptoms, or displaying challenging behaviour, should only be given antipsychotic medicines if they are severely distressed or presenting an immediate risk of harm to themselves or others. In the new report, the committee asks the Welsh government to ensure all health boards are fully compliant with these guidelines within 12 months. [More>](#)

[New Chinese policy promotes generics over branded medicines](#)

A new policy package to promote generic medicines was issued by the Chinese government last month. The policy will allow certain qualified generic medicine makers to be designated as high-tech enterprises, a label that comes with a 15% corporate tax rate, compared with 25% for other companies. The government’s health department will compile and actively update a medicines list

running scarce. Except in special circumstances, physicians will not be allowed to write brand names on prescriptions and, even if they do, pharmacists will have the right to change to qualified generics. [More>](#)

[Community pharmacists in England delivered over 1.3m flu vaccines in 2017](#)

Community pharmacists in England delivered over 1.3m flu vaccinations in 2017–18, according to a new report by the NHS Business Services Authority. In total, 77.1% (8,981) of all community pharmacies in the country, administered a combined 1,344,069 vaccines, an increase of almost 400,000 on 2016–17. The report also revealed that 530 more contractors provided the service in 2017–18 than in the previous year, with an average of 150 vaccines administered by each pharmacy. [More>](#)

[Australian pharmacists lack supplement knowledge, according to new study](#)

Australian pharmacists need specialised and targeted education on complementary medicines, according to a [study](#) led by the University of Canberra, published earlier this month. Researchers set out to assess pharmacists' knowledge on supplements and collected 535 completed surveys, most of which had been answered by community pharmacists. The researchers reported a mean knowledge score of 62%. The report concluded that there is a need for specialised and targeted education focusing on relevant and efficacious complementary medicines with a strong clinical evidence base. [More>](#)

[Substance that enhances TB treatment discovered](#)

A team of researchers, including one based at the Institute of Pharmacy, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenburg in Germany, has developed a novel class of 1,4-dihydropyridines that selectively enhance the toxicity of isoniazid against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The development is reported in the April edition of the journal [Molecules](#). Owing to resistance problems with anti-TB drugs, the researchers sought to find enhancers of mycobacterial drug effectiveness, especially those that might counteract the mechanisms that cause resistance. The discovery represents the first instance of such compounds. [More>](#)

[Multivitamin may reduce respiratory illnesses in cystic fibrosis patients, study finds](#)

Taking a specially formulated, antioxidant-enriched multivitamin may decrease respiratory illnesses in people with cystic fibrosis (CF), according to a [study](#) published in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* in January. Researchers at Children's Hospital Colorado and the University of Colorado School of Medicine looked at the effects of a "cocktail" of multiple antioxidants on inflammation and health outcomes in patients with CF. The 16-week study involved 73 pancreatic-insufficient CF patients aged 10 years and older (average age 22 years). Antioxidant supplementation was found to be safe and well tolerated, resulting in increased systemic antioxidant concentrations and modest reductions in systemic inflammation after four weeks. Antioxidant treatment was also associated with a lower risk of first pulmonary exacerbation. The antioxidants used in the study were delivered in a capsule specifically designed for individuals with difficulties absorbing fats and proteins, including those with CF. [More>](#)

[Smartphone apps may improve adherence — more research needed](#)

suffering with chronic diseases, but more research is needed, according to data and analytics company GlobalData. Medication non-adherence accounts for about half of uncontrolled hypertension, and more than 100 smartphone apps are already available to assist in self-management of hypertension alone, according to results from a [study](#) published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* in April. Researchers evaluated the effectiveness of a smartphone app on medication non-adherence and blood pressure control among patients with poorly controlled hypertension. They found that patients randomised to use a smartphone app had a small improvement in self-reported medication adherence but no change in systolic blood pressure compared with controls. They say this means that the benefit of this and other stand-alone mobile health interventions on clinical outcomes remains to be established. [More>](#)



MEMBER ORGANISATION NEWS

Brazil: Adherence to medicines campaign launched

A national campaign to promote adherence to medicines and their safe and rational use was launched by the Brazilian Federal Council of Pharmacy (CFF) on the national day for the rational use of medicines earlier this month. Throughout May, volunteers have been visiting public health facilities, including pharmacies, to check whether polymedicated patients have access to and adhere to medicines treatment. For every Brazilian real invested in medicines supply, the government spends five reals to treat medicines-related morbidities, according to CFF. This includes adverse reactions (39.3% of expenditure), non-adherence to treatments (36.9% of expenditure) and use of incorrect doses (16.9% of expenditure). [More>](#)

Germany: Pharmacist campaign starts with record participation of pharmacies

A campaign highlighting the indispensable role of pharmacists has started with a record-breaking participation of pharmacies, according to the Federal Union of German Associations of Pharmacists (ABDA). More than 5,800 of approximately 19,700 of German pharmacies are participating. The new look and feel of the campaign (“Simply Indispensable”) is meant to appeal to a younger target group, according to ABDA. “The central issue remains the importance of pharmacies for society and patients”, said Reiner Kern, ABDA’s head of communication. The campaign includes patients’ testimonies about their health and the importance of pharmacists to them. “The emotional stories are a great success. So far, we had more than 16 million views with five videos,” said Mr Kern. [More>](#)

USA: Pharmacists to serve on pain management task force

Two pharmacists have been appointed to the newly established Pain Management Best Practices Inter-Agency Task Force of the US Department of Health and Human Services. The task force will assess best practices and issue recommendations that address gaps or inconsistencies for managing chronic and acute pain. The appointed pharmacists — Sondra Adkinson and Nicholas Hagemeyer — are both members of the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). “Dr Adkinson and Dr Hagemeyer are excellent choices for the task force. Their combined skill sets include significant research contributions specific to the opioid epidemic in rural settings, proficiency in interprofessional relationships and team-based care models, and experience in caring for patients in different settings,” said Thomas Menighan, executive vice president and chief executive officer,

Commonwealth: UHC requires investment in pharmacy, CPA says

Many low- and middle-income countries still lack the pharmacy workforce needed to provide universal health coverage, Victoria Rutter, executive director of the Commonwealth Pharmacists Association, told delegates at the People's Commonwealth Forum in London last month. Leading the panel's session on global health workforce needs, delivered in collaboration with FIP Education, Ms Rutter told delegates that "the global rise of non-communicable diseases has led to patients presenting with increasingly complex health needs, which in turn require the effective management of increasingly complex medication regimens". [More>](#)

Eritrea: Pharmacists association aims to enhance health service development

Timely information on the efficiency and efficacy of newly introduced medicines will be provided by the Eritrean Pharmaceutical Association in cooperation with other stakeholders, the association indicated earlier this month. With this move the association aims to contribute to the development of health service provision. The objective is to ensure the safety of patients and effective use of medicines as well as to create the opportunity for members to upgrade their skill through training programmes and scholarships, according to Abraham Endrias, chairman, Eritrean Pharmaceutical Association. [More>](#)

Nigeria: PSN calls for more family planning roles for community pharmacists

An expansion of family planning services provided by community pharmacists was called for by the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN) in collaboration with the Partnership for Advocacy in Child and Family Health (PACFaH), earlier this month. Improved access to contraceptives can help reduce the number of women dying from pregnancy and childbirth-related complications, according to Edwin Akpotor, programme officer, PSN-PACFaH. Up to 60% of family planning services reach women through community pharmacies, Mr Akpotor says. Over 100 women die daily in the process of giving birth, and 30% of these deaths can be prevented by improving access to contraceptives and increasing uptake of family planning services, according to Mr Akpotor. [More>](#)

Brazil: Pharmacists offer clinical services on national television

Pharmacists in Brazil offered services to 1,400 patients in cities all around the country, which was aired on national television last month. The project was set up by the Brazilian Federal Council of Pharmacy (CFF) in collaboration with the Globo television network — the largest in South America — in a series of live events in different cities, which aired to millions of viewers across the country. The services offered included medicines use reviews, point-of-care tests, health education and disease screening and management activities. "The pharmaceutical profession is undergoing a major transformation and this programme has been a national showcase for that," said Walter da Silva João, CFF president. [More>](#)

Switzerland: pharmaSuisse marks 175th anniversary by reflecting on future of profession

The ambition to strengthen the role of pharmacies as a gateway to the healthcare system was affirmed by pharmaSuisse (Swiss pharmacists association) as it celebrated its 175th anniversary this month. In recent years, the scope of practice of pharmacists has expanded and will soon

campaign is to encourage patients to visit a pharmacy before going to a doctor or hospital for advice and triage on minor ailments. [More>](#)

[Austria: Pharmacists criticise pro-deregulation report](#)

The conclusions drawn in a recently released report by the Federal Competition Authority on pharmacy competitiveness were criticised by the Austrian Chamber of Pharmacists earlier this month. “Anyone who measures the quality of our healthcare system solely with the rules of competition, plays with health, and even with the lives of patients,” said Ulrike Mursch-Edlmayr, president, Austrian Chamber of Pharmacists. The report mentions positive effects for consumers of the free establishment of pharmacy branches, such as an increase in the number of pharmacies and better access to medicines. However, according to Ms Mursch-Edlmayr: “The assumption that more competition leads to better service is not only naive, but simply wrong.” [More>](#)



WHO NEWS

[First WHO list of essential diagnostic tests list published](#)

A [catalogue](#) of the tests needed to diagnose the most common conditions as well as a number of global priority diseases was published by the World Health Organization earlier this month. The list concentrates on in vitro tests — i.e., tests on human specimens like blood and urine. It contains 113 products. Fifty-eight tests are listed for detection and diagnosis of a wide range of common conditions, providing an essential package that can form the basis for screening and management of patients. The remaining 55 tests are designed for the detection, diagnosis and monitoring of “priority” diseases such as HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis B and C, human papilloma virus and syphilis. [More>](#)

[Investing in NCDs control generates financial and health gains](#)

The world’s poorest countries could gain USD 350bn (EUR 300bn) by 2030 by scaling up investments in preventing and treating non-communicable diseases, like heart disease and cancer, according to a new WHO [report](#) published earlier this month. This would save more than eight million lives over the same period, according to the report. The report shows that for every USD 1 invested in scaling up actions to address NCDs in low- and lower-middle-income countries, there will be a return to society of at least USD 7 through increased employment and productivity, and longer life. [More>](#)

[World Health Assembly delegates agree on new five-year strategic plan](#)

A new strategic plan for the next five years was agreed by World Health Assembly (WHA) delegates last week. The strategic plan is designed to help the world achieve the Sustainable Development Goals — with a particular focus on SDG3: ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all at all ages by 2030. FIP was also present at the WHA and stated that new delivery models for integrated, people-centred services (highlighted in the strategic plan) will only



FIP CONGRATULATES...

- Mr Jesús Aguilar on being reelected president of the General Pharmaceutical Council of Spain

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