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World Pharmacopoeias move towards increased global co-operation

At the 11th International Meeting of the World Pharmacopoeias (IMWP) co-hosted by the WHO and the EDQM in Strasbourg (France), national and regional pharmacopoeias brought forward initiatives to strengthen their co-operation as a way to improve public health outcomes for patients.

Following up on discussions which had taken place at the 10th IMWP, a new framework for exchanging information between the Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG) and the IMWP was presented by PDG. The IMWP participants welcomed the proposal and agreed to run a one-year pilot phase to test this new framework, which is expected to facilitate exchanging information and lays out new ways and modalities for co-operation.

A white paper on the value of pharmacopoeial standards and the role of pharmacopoeias for health systems was finalised at the meeting. It will soon be published by the WHO Secretariat on behalf of World Pharmacopoeias. The IMWP would welcome feedback from stakeholders on the usefulness of this white paper.

Pharmacopoeias shared an update on their respective responses to the *N-nitrosamine* contamination in medicines. This exchange which was initiated at the 10 IMWP was found very helpful to facilitate alignment of actions to be taken by the different pharmacopoeias in support of decisions by the Regulatory Authorities.

Participants reemphasised the importance of exchanges between the world pharmacopoeias and agreed to increase meeting frequency by adding regular virtual meetings in addition to the annual face-to-face meetings.

"Quality of medicines is a priority for WHO, and the International Meeting of World Pharmacopoeias is the ideal platform to emphasise the role and the importance of quality aspects when speaking about access to medicines worldwide", said Dr Sabine Kopp, Team Lead Norms and Standards for Pharmaceuticals (WHO). "It's an important step towards the achievement of healthy lives and well-being for all, as set in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals."

Pharmacopoeias set quality standards for manufacturers to produce medicines and vaccines which are safe and of quality. Regulators ensure that manufacturers comply with these quality standards, before medicines are authorised to be put on the market.

- More [information on the IMWP](#) – the platform for the pharmacopoeias of the World to share knowledge and co-operate for the benefit of public health.
- More [information on international harmonisation activities](#) among pharmacopoeias.

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Note for the Editor: Further information is available on the internet site <https://www.edqm.eu/>.

The EDQM is a leading organisation that protects public health by enabling development, supporting implementation, and monitoring the application of quality standards for safe medicines

and their safe use. Our standards are recognised as a scientific benchmark worldwide. The European Pharmacopoeia is legally binding in member states.¹ Similarly, the EDQM develops guidance and standards in the areas of blood transfusion, organ transplantation and consumer health issues.

1. There are 40 members of the [European Pharmacopoeia Commission](#): *Austria, Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the European Union.*

A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.