2017 Essential Medicines List published

The WHO Essential Medicines List 2017 update was published on 6 June. As a vital tool to expand access to medicines, the new list saw a landmark classification of antibiotics to reduce resistance and the introduction of innovative medicines such as the first combination medicine to treat all types of hepatitis C and two new oral cancer medicines.

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Strategic advisory group on in vitro diagnostics

The Expert Committee for the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines also recommended that WHO develop an essential list of in vitro diagnostics. Next steps include a WHO call for nominations of experts for the new Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on In Vitro Diagnostics (SAGE IVD). The SAGE IVD will act as an advisory body to WHO on matters of global policies and strategies related to IVDs.

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Fair pricing forum paves the way for expanded access to medicines

Access to medicines is a major challenge for all countries as medicines prices soar, particularly for innovative products. Public health spending is limited and when prices are too high, access will be rationed, denying patients urgently needed treatment. At the same time, some older medicines whose price has sunk too low are disappearing from markets, signalling that too low prices are not good for access either. To begin to address these challenges and potential solutions, the first ever Fair Pricing Forum was held on Thursday 11 May 2017 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

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Regulatory preparedness key to addressing public health emergencies

The 2014-2016 Ebola crisis in West Africa highlighted major shortcomings in the world’s preparedness for serious epidemics and public health emergencies. It also showed that National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) have a strong role to play, but they must have effective preparedness and response plans in place. To that end, WHO held an informal consultation in Geneva, on 17-19 May, on options to improve regulatory preparedness.

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WHO to begin pilot prequalification of biosimilars for cancer treatment

WHO will launch a pilot project for prequalifying two biosimilar cancer medicines, a step towards making some of the most expensive treatments for cancer more widely available and affordable in low- and middle-income countries. Plans for extending the pilot to diabetes treatments are underway.

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WHO prequalifies first generic active ingredient for hepatitis C medicines

On 31 March 2017, WHO for the first time prequalified a generic active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) for hepatitis C – sofosbuvir. Sofosbuvir is an essential ingredient for new, highly effective medicines to treat hepatitis C called direct active antivirals (DAAs). The prequalified product’s manufacturer is Mylan Laboratories Ltd. INDIA.

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New: TOWARDS ACCESS 2030

EMP along with regional colleagues elaborated a vision and strategic framework – Towards Access 2030, which will inform the future work of the department and related programmes to help countries meet SDG 3 and reach UHC. Implementation of the framework will build on work started in 2016 to increase quantitative and qualitative data informing our policies and work, and a renewed focus on impact in countries.

Download publication >

Coming soon

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>26 – 27 July 2017</td>
<td>Consultation on Medicines Shortages</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 – 15 September 2017</td>
<td>Good Clinical Practices (GCP) Inspection course</td>
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