

Report from Norway for the EIPG General Assembly in Malta 20 - 21 May 2017

2016 -May 2017

Health policy:

Inhalation guidance – a publicly funded service

This was one of the most important political issue for the pharmacy sector in 2016. This service performed by qualified and competence pharmacist, became a publicly funded service. It's free for patient and the service is based on industry standard prepared by the Norwegian Pharmacy Association. Test scheme were evaluated in the end of 2016, and is continuing in 2017.

The main content in the industry standard are:

- The service can be requested by a patient (including guardians for children with an inhaled medicine), referenced.
- By a doctor or offered by a pharmacy employee after need mapping.
- Patients who are new inhaler users should be offered a demonstration of proper inhalation technique.
- The patient shows his inhalation technique. The pharmacist should check if the patient's technique is correct and give corrective advice when needed.
- The pharmacist should provide information on storage and cleaning of the inhaler, as appropriate, and how you can see that the inhaler is empty.
- Based on the prescribing of the doctor, the pharmacist must ensure that the patient knows when they are different inhalants should be taken.

This service performed by pharmacists in pharmacy, shows the importance of including more tutoring services in pharmacy in the health service.

“Pharmacist only - Utilization of existing drug expertise”

NOMA (Norwegian Medicine Agency) have suggested an arrangement, which contribute to utilize existing drug expertise of pharmacists in Pharmacies. With such an arrangement, existing pharmaceutical drug expertise in pharmacies may further be utilized to prevent disease and alleviate suffering in people and animals. The scheme will give pharmacists opportunity to extradite selected drugs to patients, which normally requires prescriptions.

The Norwegian Association of Pharmacists (NFF) are initially positive for establishing the pharmacist only scheme. However, it requires clarifications. The Norwegian Association participate actively in this work, and have written a letter with suggestions to NOMA.

Buying prescript medicines online, “Online pharmacy”:

In October-16, the government granted the legislation for buying medicines on prescriptions online. If a patient has an electronic prescription, he/she can order the medicine at online pharmacy and have the medicine delivered at home or at the local post office. It's still unknown how this will affect the local pharmacies.

Drug shortages:

Drug shortages are still a growing problem internationally, and Norway are still vulnerable in a major emergency. It's works continuously to have reliable supply of medicinal products and the need for reserve stock. NOMA updates list over the drugs which is shortages of. NOMA also issuing alerts for patients, pharmacies and prescribers.

Adverse report

In 2016, NOMA received 3366 adverse reactions from healthcare professionals, patients and drug manufacturers. Half of the messages were classified as serious. The number of messages from healthcare professionals is stable while messages from patients increase.

166 reports of fatal outcomes. Three drug groups contributed to 90% of the deaths.

- Antithrombotic and anticoagulant drugs – 36 %
- Drugs that work on the nervous system – 27 %
- Drugs and agents that work on the immune system – 27 %

Pharmaceutical Industry:

In general, this sector had uplifting news in 2016. Curida AS is a growing company which signed a long-term contract. The assignment is to produce a variety of products in sterile ampoules. This contract secured work place for many employees.

GE Healthcare has moved their production from the United States and the United Kingdom to Norway. One of the reason for this is that these staff in Norway have expertise to work with research and development, and production. GE Healthcare have increased their staff because of this.

The medicine fish feed industries are still growing. In 2016 two of the feed producer applied for GMP certificate, one of the producer increased their capacity by expanding their plant. This sector still requires more pharmacists with competence especially within GMP and production. The industries are working on a new drug for medical treatments.

Activites carried out by The Norwegian Association of Pharmacists:

There has been a lot of work and focus on the work to promote competence of pharmacists. The increased contact with the political environment has been carry on. One of the biggest achievement is the Inhalation guidance, a funded service. This will highlight the role of pharmacist in general.

The Association has also joined the Nordic Declaration on “Pharmacy's Fight Against Antibiotics Resistance”. The Nordic Pharmaceutical Union (NFU) will actively contribute to ensuring the availability and proper use of effective antibiotics and equivalent agents. NFU, consists of all five Nordic pharma organizations, Denmark, Sweden, Island, Finland and Norway.

Florø, 4th May 2017

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