

LITHUANIA

Recent and planned developments in pharmaceutical policies 2023

CHANGES IN PRICING

- **Change in VAT** for COVID-19 vaccines since 1st Jan 2023 (5% VAT instead 0% VAT).
- **External Price Referencing** - 5 lowest ex-factory prices in EU countries for pharmaceuticals in the competitive clusters from 1st July 2023 instead of price competition.

CHANGES IN REIMBURSEMENT

- **Changes in ceilings of co-payments** from 1st July 2023:
 - if medicinal products retail price is below 25 Euros, the patient maximum co-payment cannot be higher than 25% of reimbursed (basic) price (instead of 20 Euros and 20%);
 - If medicinal products retail price is more than 25 Euros, the patient maximum co-payment cannot exceed 5,87 Euros (instead of 20 Euros and 4,71 Euros).
- **Patient co-payment basket** is the coverage of co-payment for medicinal products with the lowest co-payment in the list of reimbursed medicinal products for all persons who spent more than 3 average amounts of co-payments (48,36 EUR) within a period of one calendar year (the coverage period) when purchasing medicinal products with the lowest co-payment. From 1st July 2023.

OTHER CHANGES

IT projects: Ministry of Health together with State Enterprise Centre of Registers implement the development project of the electronic health services and cooperation infrastructure information system: modernisation of electronic health services system (ESPBI IS), improving or creating new functionalities to e-prescription, e.g. introducing classifiers, automatization of e-processes of prescribing and selling the medicinal products, implementation of functionalities to report suspected adverse drug reaction, implementing information for prescriber regarding shortages (permanent or temporary supply disruptions) of the medicinal products, providing safety-related notices (e.g. dear doctor letter) or educational materials.

Educational and information activities: Initiative to strengthen knowledge about the rational prescription and use of medicines in elderly. Planned activities:

- trainings for health care professionals and pharmacists (for 1500 specialists) and seminars for the patients (for 500 patients);
- preparation of educational material (publications) for patients (200 units + electronic version) and specialists (electronic version);
- reference material (4 infographics and 20 000 units of leaflets);
- educational videos (2 videos and 2 months streaming on national TV and public transport).

SPECIAL TOPIC:

Developing and implementing pharmaceutical policies in view of the current challenges (soaring inflation, medicine price increases, increasing no. of medicine shortages)

- 1) The problem of **medicine shortages** (i.e. especially in certain product groups like antibiotics) seems to have intensified:
 - Did you introduce new measures to tackle this recently?
Review of the regulation of the monitoring of the stock of reimbursed medicines is being considered alongside the currently applied measures such as national register to report shortages, special permits for import of medicines without need for patient information leaflet (PIL) in Lithuanian language to be dispensed by pharmacies, medicines without Lithuanian PIL can be supplied to hospitals with no special permit, supply of medicines on a named patient basis and emergency authorisations in response to the suspected or confirmed spread of pathogenic agents, toxins, chemical agents or nuclear radiation. Proposal to the Government submitted regarding direct purchase of medicines by health care institutions from wholesalers from any EEA country. In cases where it is not possible to purchase medicines from wholesaler, a health care institution is allowed to purchase them from another health care institution that still has stocks of such medicines. In exceptional cases, it is allowed to supply medicines purchased from the state budget, NHIF funds through health care institutions.
- 2) **Price increases:**
 - Do you have specific policies for price increases?
Price freezing is already in place:
Base (reimbursed) price freezing (price in the new Pricelist cannot exceed the previous) (for medicines of one manufacturer from 1 October 2019, medicines of two and more manufacturers – from 1 January 2020). From 1 January 2023 this provision has been transposed into the Law on Pharmacy along with periodic reviews of the "freeze provision".
- 3) Introduction or discussion of **other measures related to current challenges** (high inflation rates, budget caps, high-priced medicines, introduction of production sites in Europe, etc.) – please list them here.