



PHARMACISTS' SOCIETY OF LATVIA

Section of Industrial Pharmacists

COUNTRY REPORT 2017–2019

31st March 2020

Founded: 11th January, 2006

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Membership: Total of 28 members (including full members and supporters)

Mission:

- to promote better integration and communication between the pharmaceutical industry and community pharmacists;
- to promote high standards of professional training relevant to the needs of industrial pharmacy;
- to expand the role of pharmacists within the industry;
- to inform the Pharmacists' Society of issues to impacting industrial pharmacy;
- to promote the professional contribution of pharmacists in the pharmaceutical industry.

Activities of IPS Latvia 2017–2019

Publications in the IPS Latvia Newsletter (issued since March, 2008), local medical and scientific journal *Materia Medica*, lay press.

Experience exchange workshops:

- “Daugavgrīva” municipal wastewater treatment plant: <https://www.rigasudens.lv/lv/>;
- Riga Stradins University Nuclear Medicine Clinic: <https://www.rsu.lv/en/about-us/>;
- Latvian Biomedical Research and Study Centre: <http://biomed.lu.lv/en/about-us/who-we-are/>;
- Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment “BIOR”: <https://www.bior.lv/en/>;
- Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis: <http://www.osi.lv/en/>.

Participation:

- Conference “Safer Europe without Falsified Medicines” (Tallinn, Estonia), 2017;
- Examination commission of the study program "Industrial Pharmacy" of Riga Stradins University, 2017 and 2018;
- LAMPA Conversation festival, 2018;
- BaltPharm Forum 2019; 13-14 April in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Planned activities in 2020

- Admission of new members and supporters (5 new participants were admitted in March 2020);
- Provision of trainings for IPS members and supporters (training in the form of a workshop or webinar is scheduled for June and October 2020);
- Publications in local medical and scientific journal *Materia Medica*;
- Experience exchange workshops;
- Collaboration with other sections of the Pharmacist Society of Latvia, e.g. Clinical Pharmacists, Hospital Pharmacists and Oncology Pharmacists;
- Active participation on EIPG events (e.g. webinars);
- Completion of delegated tasks of the Pharmacist Society of Latvia and EIPG;
- Response and local insight on reflection papers received from EIPG;
- Contribution in the preparation of the EIPG's monthly newsletter.

Main topics of pharmaceutical industry in Latvia 2019

Increase in Latvian pharmaceutical manufacturers' sales turnover

The State Agency of Medicines (SAM) informs that in 2019 the total sales turnover of Latvian pharmaceutical manufacturers (medicines and other goods) was 255.09 million euros (excluding VAT), an increase of 18% compared to 2018. Turnover of medicines sold in Latvia shows an increase of 16% compared to 2018. Turnover of medicines sold outside of Latvia shows an increase of 19% compared to 2018.

Implementation of the verification system

Implementation of the medicine verification system to prevent the threat of falsified medicines being supplied through legitimate distribution channels to consumers – a challenge for all relevant parts.

Latvia is actively participating in serialization; local pharma industry, wholesalers and pharmacies together with authorities has set up or adjusted their internal procedures and IT systems with no stabilisation period.

The verification system has connected 1205 users in Latvia. However, new connections are continually being set up. Latvian Medicines Verification System checked nearly 22 million packages in its first year.

Medication shortages

In 2019 Latvia faced one of the most noticeable increase in medication shortages and delays of pharmaceutical goods as of lately. The increase in drug shortages wearies due to multiple reasons: various manufacturing problems (from raw material shortages, technology adjustments to production failures, quality issues), miscalculation of the relationship between supply and demand, changes in the local and global pharmaceutical, economical markets, artificial shortages. Local legislation is a tool for a market development, in 2019 there were no export restrictions, now there are plans for operative

export bans. Multiple changes in local legislation are put in action in order to control the situation. Pharmaceutical industry is adjusting. The affect is yet to be determined.

New opportunities for pharmacists to study in comfort at their home

To expand the opportunities for pharmacists to improve their knowledge and collect further education points in convenience at their own home, “Latvian Medicines Information Center”, a commercial structure under the supervision of Pharmacists’ Society of Latvia has created a new website for distance training.

Current topics of pharmaceutical industry in Latvia

Improvement of medication access – supply and price are the main goal of 2020 for health care system and pharmaceutical industry.

Changes in legislation as tool and solution to improve medication access that affects pharmaceutical industry include:

- From April 1st 2020 the international non-proprietary name (INN) of medicinal products will be used as part of the List A reimbursement system, in this way community pharmacists will be obligated to dispense equivalent therapeutic efficacy medicinal products with the lowest price.
- Therefore, the information included in the Medicinal Product Register will be very important and shall reflect true status of medication availability. It is of the highest importance that the State Agency of Medicines (SAM) receives information regarding shortages of medicinal products or renewal of their availability as soon as possible. MAHs are responsible for placement of medicinal product on the market and for timely notification of medicinal product supply disruptions. MAHs will be obliged to notify SAM on any supply disruptions.
- Wholesalers are obliged to notify SAM on daily basis on stock supply in order to monitor national inventories of medicines, identify risks of non-availability of medicines and prevent artificial inaccessibility of medicines.

Linda Meška

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