

Implementation of prescribing by active substance

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY**

Having regard to:

1. the provisions of para 5 of Article 21 of Law 4052/2012;
2. the fact that the government budget shall not incur any expenditure as a result of this Decision;

We decide as follows:

1. Within five days of the publication hereof and by 10 March 2012 at the latest, EOF must codify and draw up a single list with all the medicines included in the Positive List and reimbursed by social security funds, classified by ATC code and active substance. In this list the respective prices of each medicinal product shall also be included.
2. By the same deadline, EOF shall integrate a list with all medicines, by active substance and by protocol, into the 160 therapeutic protocols.
3. The lists shall be updated by the same procedure whenever an Official Price Bulletin is published or new therapeutic protocols are approved. These lists shall be validated by a decision of the Minister of Health, be integrated into the IT systems of all NHS hospitals and take immediate effect, as follows:
  - a) Each hospital, by a decision of its Manager, shall identify the ten major therapeutic categories, in terms of expenditure, taking into account of the type and focus of the institution (e.g. general, oncological, specialised, etc.), as well as the medical specialties that shall apply them. These decisions shall be issued by 10 March 2012 at the latest.
  - b) Hospital doctors shall prescribe by chemical name and on the basis of the two lists of EOF.
  - c) The hospital pharmacy shall dispense the cheapest available medicine with the same active substance.
4. After the first month of implementation and by 31 March 2012 at the latest, all therapeutic categories, following any corrections/interventions, and all the medical specialties of the hospital shall be integrated into the IT system, and prescribing by active substance shall apply mandatorily and universally.
5. The lists referred to in paragraph 3 shall be immediately forwarded to social security funds and IDIKA (e-governance of social insurance) and shall be integrated into the e-prescription system. As from 1 April 2012, all doctors prescribing on behalf of social security funds shall prescribe by active substance for the ten most consumed therapeutic categories as set out in the Appendix hereof.
6. All doctors shall be required to select the appropriate medicine in compliance with both the applicable therapeutic protocols and the therapeutic relevance of the active substance. This shall apply universally (across all specialties using the respective categories) and, until 1 June 2012, on a pilot basis, with a regular monthly assessment of results. From 1 June onwards, universal and mandatory prescribing by active substance shall apply to all therapeutic categories of the positive list.
7. When executing e-prescriptions, pharmacists shall dispense the cheapest medicine for the same active substance. Where such cheapest medicine is not in stock, the pharmacist shall inform the patient of the cheapest medicine available in the Greek market. If the patient opts for a more expensive medicine with the same active substance, he shall pay the price difference over the cheapest medicine. The pharmacist or the patient does not have the option to substitute with a medicine of different active substance or a different combination of active substances.

8. EOPYY may engage in further negotiations in order to achieve lower prices. In any event, the pharmacy shall be required to dispense the cheapest medicine.

#### APPENDIX

Table of therapeutic categories by ATC code  
(as stated in the positive list)

##### Alimentary ATC A

A02BC Proton pump inhibitors (gastroprotection)

##### Blood ATC B

B01AC G2 Platelet aggregation inhibitors

##### Cardiovascular ATC C (antihypertensives)

ACE inhibitors

C09AA ACE inhibitors plain

C09BA ACE inhibitors and diuretics

C09BB ACE inhibitors and calcium channel blockers

##### Angiotensin receptor antagonists

C09C A Angiotensin II antagonists, plain

C09D A Angiotensin II antagonists with diuretics

C09D B Angiotensin II antagonists with calcium channel blockers

C09D X Angiotensin II antagonists, combinations

##### Lipid modifying agents (statins)

C10A Lipid modifying agents, plain

##### Nervous system ATC N

N05AX Antipsychotics G1 Risperidone, Paliperidone

N06B – A Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors.

We order that this Decision be published in the Government Gazette.

Athens, 1 March 2012

THE MINISTER

**ANDREAS LOVERDOS**