**May 20, 2020: International Clinical Trials Day**

**Clinical Trial as a valuable “weapon” in the fight against COVID-19 for a brighter tomorrow**

**Halandri, 18.05.2020.–** On the occasion of the International Clinical Trials Day (May 20th) the Hellenic Association of Pharmaceutical Companies (SFEE) stresses, once again, the important role of Clinical Trials in the conquest of the boon of Good Public Health. All the more so, under the current conjecture, the importance of Clinical Research is validated through the huge endeavour of a large number of clinical trials (more than 1000) taking place worldwide, with a view to fighting the pandemic and finding a vaccine and a cure for the COVID-19 disease.

The global community has placed its hopes on clinical research, in order to deal with the current pandemic and prepare and secure protection against eventual future ones. SFEE, having fully appreciated the added value Clinical Research offers, has always been proactive and dynamic in its struggle to promote it in Greece. Under the current, dire circumstances, pharma industry supports the patients and makes every effort for the unimpeded continuation of the clinical trials, despite the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 crisis.

The benefits drawn from clinical trials are multiple, primarily for the patients participating in them, since the latter are offered rapid access to new treatments, free medicines and free lab tests and diagnostics, while having constant and continuous high-level medical monitoring. At the same time, clinical research attracts direct foreign investments (FDI), introduces research know-how, enhances entrepreneurship and employment of high-caliber scientific personnel with state-of-the-art education, saves resources for the National Health System and substantially contributes in the development of National Economy.

Clinical Studies constitute an incredible opportunity for Greece, which remains largely untapped. More than €35 billion are invested annually in Europe and Greece hardly absorbs €40 million, unfortunately! Our country fulfills all the prerequisites for the absorption of a far greater number of research projects and investments in the next three years, reaching a funds allocation up to €250million annually. The strategic objective of SFEE and its member companies is the promotion of our country as a Clinical Trials Hub of international appeal, which will offer a new breath and boost both Public Health and National Economy.

Several steps were made for the attraction of investments, nevertheless there are great improvement margins, given that the specific sector is extremely competitive, at a global scale. The extremely productive and promising sector of Clinical Research must be upgraded as one of the paramount priorities of the Health Policy. The creation of a research orientation in the various Public Health structures involved in running clinical research projects, the seamless flow of processes and the introduction of respective incentives, constitute the basic elements which may improve the respective indices of our country’s activities in Clinical Research and which, in turn, will lead to the attraction of important investment funds.

SFEE President, Mr. Olympios Papadimitriou, noted: “At an era when Global Public Health challenges can only be addressed through additional innovation brought about by incessant pharmacological research, the boosting of Clinical Trials in our country should be considered by the State a basic pillar of development. Our industry is well aware of this fact – we expect the state to fully realise it and turn to action. Rationalising pharmaceutical expenditure, introducing the new revolutionary treatments in the country, strengthening the clinical research activities and boosting the cooperation of Greek and international companies are the necessary elements for securing good public health and sustainable economic development.

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