

## AUSTRIA

### Rational use of medicines in the in- and out-patient sector

#### Educational strategies (not exhaustive):

- ⇒ Regular trainings/workshops for prescribers (out- and in-patient)
- ⇒ Sickness funds provide information on e.g. generics and price comparisons to prescribers
- ⇒ Hospital pharmacies provide information/newsletters to hospital doctors
- ⇒ Information sessions for patients organised by e.g. medical universities
- ⇒ Media campaign to inform about counterfeit medicines (TV and cinema spots)
- ⇒ Newspapers of sickness funds for patients
- ⇒ Independent website with information on health and medicines

#### Managerial strategies (not exhaustive):

- ⇒ Guidelines on the economic prescription of medicines and therapeutic aids
- ⇒ Treatment guidelines for certain diseases
- ⇒ Prescription software and database of medicines with price comparisons
- ⇒ Reimbursement list for the out-patient sector, published as a brochure and on the web (access free of charge)
- ⇒ Individual pharmaceutical formularies in hospitals

Strategies to  
improve use of  
medicines

#### Economic strategies (not exhaustive):

- ⇒ Financial incentives for prescribers of some sickness funds to improve economic prescribing or to improve/question patients medication
- ⇒ Peer group monitoring for prescribers, prescription monitoring and price monitoring implemented by sickness funds
- ⇒ Price monitoring by hospital pharmacists

#### Regulatory strategies (not exhaustive):

- ⇒ Pharmaceutical promotional activities are regulated: Advertising in media is not allowed for POM, OTC advertising is allowed in all media. Public advertising is, however, prohibited for non-prescription medicines, the brand name of which is the same as that of its prescription-only form, as well as for reimbursable OTC products.
- ⇒ Several bodies dealing with classification of medicines: Restriction Committee, Prescription Committee and the Restriction Commission

#### Evaluations of the measures:

- ⇒ The PPI (Pharma Price Information) service allows price monitoring and reviews.
- ⇒ Peer group monitoring for prescribers by sickness fund (see economic strategies above), but no national monitoring reporting on pharmaceutical expenditure and consumption
- ⇒ Evaluation in a study as of 2008: with the introduction of a reference price system and generic substitution (not implemented yet) annual savings of up to € 70 million savings per year could be achieved