

[Joint press release] The European Health Community welcomes President-elect Juncker's decision to ensure the security of all Europeans by regulating health for the public good

October 22th 2014, Brussels – The NGO signatories of this statement wholeheartedly welcome the announcement of the reversal of the decision by President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker to move the competence for pharmaceutical and medical devices to the enterprise directorate (1).

Following negotiations within the European Parliament and concerns expressed by a number of member states, President-elect Juncker stated today that the *"responsibility for medicines and pharmaceutical products will stay with the Directorate-General for Health because I agree with you that **medicines are not goods like any other**. The relevant policy will be developed jointly by Vytenis Andriukaitis and by Elżbieta Bieńkowska, who showed her incredible talents in her hearing."* (2)

This signals that these policies are seen by President-elect Juncker as an essential part of European health policy. It also indicates that the safety and security of Europeans are prioritised in the new Commission. We would like to warmly thank President-elect Juncker for his commitment to the promise that he made in response to an open letter (3) sent to him by 35 public health organisations where he stated that *"As President of the Commission, I will make sure that public health will be at least as important in our policies as internal market considerations."* (4)

With this new perspective, Mr Juncker has demonstrated that medicines are not an ordinary internal market good and that pharmaceutical policy is crucial to the sustainability of health systems; not solely an instrument for promoting economic growth.

This can be seen also as a clear victory for public health, patients and European citizens. Commissioner-Designate for Health and Food Safety, Dr Vytenis Andriukaitis (5) will now have the tools to fulfil his mandate to harmonise pharmaceutical governance within the EU and facilitate emergency preparedness; the very reasons that in 2009 led the European Commission to move responsibility for medicines and medical devices into the hands of the health Commissioner.

[Signatories, in alphabetic order](#) 



- **Notes to the editors**

(1) Earlier this year, when announcing his College of Commissioners-designate, Mr Juncker revealed that health technology and pharmaceutical policy will be moved from the competences of the Commissioner-designate for Health and Food Safety, Dr Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis, to the portfolio of Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Commissioner-designate for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

(2) [Setting Europe in Motion: President-elect Juncker's Main Messages from his speech before the European Parliament.](#)

(3) [Open Letter] [To President-elect Jean-Claude Juncker on move of medicinal products and health technologies to the portfolio of the Commissioner for internal market and industry.](#)

(4) Mr Juncker's response [letter can be read here.](#)

(5) [EPHA public statement on the designation of Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis as new European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety.](#)

- **Contact information**

Javier Delgado Rivera, EPHA Communications Coordinator at javier@epha.org or +32(0) 2 230 3076.