

Sending Medicines to Ukraine



PDA is a member of EPHEU, which is the umbrella union for many pharmacist unions across the continent of Europe. Currently, PDA holds a senior position within that organization and as the PDA Chairman I am currently the Secretary General of EPHEU.

With the various members of EPHEU spreading out across the continent, some of the pharmacists are in Ukraine and some are struggling with keeping the hospital service operational in the face of the devastation caused by the war and they have appealed to their EPHEU colleagues for help.

As pharmacists we will know that many medicines for hospitals are found in infusion bags, others may be specialist medicated wound dressings; some must be maintained and transported at certain temperatures and all must be protected by falsified medicines safeguards. Hospitals can only treat their patients with such medicines if they know that they have arrived through proper channels and for which the quality can be guaranteed, for only then will they know that they are safe to use on patients that need them the most.

To date, the generosity of the world's population has been astonishing. Millions of people in Poland and the other neighbouring countries have welcomed refugees into their homes. Spontaneously, communities, schools, and various places of worship across the world have organized collections. People have also sent all kinds of medicines, those that they have at home or purchased from their local pharmacy, those that they have sent together with clothes, food and even toys. Most of these acts of generosity have been delivered to the Polish Ukrainian border in cardboard boxes, transported in vans across the continent and beyond.



And herein lies the problem, the medicines that people of good will have been sending in this way will not find their way to hospitals in Ukraine. No senior pharmacist will ever accept such stock into their pharmacy, many have already gone to waste.

Consequently, the PDA has worked with its various continental pharmacist union partners to respond to the increasing calls for specialist help from Ukrainian hospitals by launching a campaign and today we are letting PDA members know about it.

Led by their national pharmacists' organisations, pharmacists are using their expertise around medicines to organize the sourcing, logistics and the safe delivery of specialist medicines to where it is most needed by Ukrainian casualties.

Help us to treat the casualties of this war in Ukrainian Hospitals

The campaign is working with Pharmacists Without Borders and other relevant charity partners such as Caritas – a Polish charity that is hugely invested in this project and massively appreciates the professional knowledge and expertise of pharmacists.

Your donations will be used to purchase the required medicines in a centralised scheme, from the most appropriate suppliers and to deliver them to the Ukrainian hospitals.

Additionally, when it is appropriate to do so, pharmacists who are already volunteering from all over the world, may be given specific training by Pharmacists without Borders and sent to help in hospitals and refugee centres being established to support the humanitarian effort.

Specialist Transportation

Working with the Polish and Ukrainian authorities, we have established secure transportation and the necessary paperwork to get the specialist medicines across the border into Ukraine under the most optimal conditions. Their help will also assist with any necessary distribution route changes due to the changing and critical nature of the situation. From the initial delivery destination of a military hospital in Ukraine, onward distribution to numerous other locations in Ukraine will then be made using appropriate hospital transportation.

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Support of the Public – a poster campaign

Whilst today we are launching this campaign in the UK amongst our members, it is fully intended to launch a much more public facing campaign with posters to be displayed in pharmacies right across the country.



These visually powerful posters position pharmacists around safe medicines supply giving the public confidence that their donations will be handled professionally with precision and to maximum effect. This campaign has been designed to operate right across the continent with posters available in a multitude of languages. A QR code takes the public straight to a website, which explains the story of what our scheme is all about in their local language.

www.medicinestoukraine.com

It is our intention to approach the national media, to explore with them the benefits of pharmacists as experts in medicines applying their expertise to help the casualties in Ukraine.

We believe that with pharmacy working together in this international way, this will be a large and successful initiative making a real difference to people's lives and we ask for your support.

A Call to Action

Naturally, we would be delighted if you could make a financial contribution by clicking on to the donations button once you have visited www.medicinestoukraine.com using your Visa or Mastercard. Caritas in Poland – a very large charity is taking on the primary financial governance role with operational support being provided by Pharmacists without Borders.

Ultimately, we would ask that for the next phase, once you receive the campaign posters (which may be distributed by a local wholesaler or delivered directly to you by the PDA in due course), that you display one where it can be seen by members of the public in your place of work. This may be in a community pharmacy window, a GP Practice or a hospital pharmacy dispensary waiting room.

I thank you in advance for your support.

Kindest regards

Mark Koziol M.R.Pharm.S.

PDA Chairman