



EAHP- REQUEST FOR THE PRODUCTION OF SINGLE DOSE-PACKED DRUGS

To improve patient's safety in drug therapy and to ensure the highest quality in medical treatment in European hospitals, the General Assembly of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists, EAHP, demands:

- the production of single dose-packed drugs from the pharmaceutical industry.
- the mandatory inclusion of a barcode on each single dose.

Hospital pharmacists are also calling on decision makers, politicians and national administrations to implement the introduction of bar-coded single dose-packed drugs in national and European regulations.

A growing number of hospitals have implemented a unit dose dispensing system, with an individualised preparation of drugs, manually in the pharmacy, or with automated dispensing machines in the pharmacy or in the ward.

To improve the efficiency of these safer procedures hospital pharmacists urge the pharmaceutical industry to supply drugs packed in single-dose units.

Hospitals have or are implementing a computerized prescription system, which allows a final control just before the administration of drugs to patients, via a bar-code system contained in the singled dose pack. This final check performed electronically by comparing the prescription with the actual prepared drugs significantly increases the patient's safety, as the human controls are not without failure (performance $\approx 85\%$). These systems also improve the traceability up to the patient level, which is more and more requested by national regulations.

EAHP demands that primary packaging precisely describes the content of the drug up to final control at bedside, enables easy and safe use of the drug and provides protection against environmental influences such as light, moisture, pressure and microbial contamination during transport, handling and storage.

Single dose packaging is a pack for a single application, alternatively, perforated multiple dose blister packs that can be easily divided into single doses packing (each of them must contain the whole information), no further manipulation necessary,

Hospital pharmacists also strongly advocate for bar-coding single doses and recommends the use of a recognized international standard, like the GS1 (ex- EAN) identification system for bar codes. The GS1-128 (ex- EAN-128) standard appears to be the best standard for the traceability of single dose units. Taking into account the problem of the available space, we recommend printing it as a bi-dimensional barcode (i.e. datamatrix).

For ampoules and vials, the same information should be provided on a label (not engraved on the glass), with additional information regarding the total amount and volume ($x \text{ mg} = y \text{ ml}$) and the concentration of the solution ($z \text{ mg/ml}$).

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