



نقابة صيادلة لبنان
Order of Pharmacists of Lebanon

Under the Patronage of His Excellency
the Minister of Public Health

Dr. Firass Abiad

The Order of Pharmacists of Lebanon
is organizing the

25th
**PHARMACIST
DAY**

Lebanon Pharmaceutical Identity:
Towards a National Pharmaceutical Strategy

هوية لبنان الدوائية:

نحو استراتيجية وطنية للقطاع الصيدلاني

MEDICAL



QUALITY



PHARMACY

PATIENTS



With Care
Director
Hospital
Pharmacist
Nurse
Dentist
First Aid
Surgeon
Emergency



Lebanon
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نقابة مصانع الأدوية في لبنان
Syndicate of Pharmaceutical Industries in Lebanon



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Towards a National Pharmaceutical Strategy in Lebanon

A commitment and a call to action to ensure access to quality and safe medications in Lebanon for all

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The Lebanese Pharma Group

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Credits

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Definition of a Drug/Medicine/Medication

According to the FDA, a drug/medicine/medication is:

- A substance recognized by an official pharmacopeia or formulary.
- A substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease.
- A substance (other than food) intended to affect the structure or any function of the body.
- A substance intended for use as a component of a medicine but not a device or a component, part or accessory of a device.
- Biological products are included within this definition.
 - Generally subject to the same laws and regulations
 - Differences in their manufacturing processes (chemical process vs. biological process).



Laws and Regulations in Lebanon

- Several laws and regulations govern the pharmaceutical sector in addition to ministerial decrees and memos issued by the MOPH.
- Law 253/2022 (dated 5/1/2022) established the **Lebanese Drug Agency (LDA)**.
 - Implementation decrees to be developed by the MOPH and submitted to the council of ministers for approval.
 - The LDA would act as the highest authority in the pharmaceutical sector in coordination with the MOPH and other stakeholders.
 - A transitional period would be necessary to organize the efforts and manage the move.



The Lebanese Context Before 2019

■ The market:

- Import-driven: 93% of the products imported from around 40 countries.
- Brand-driven: 68% of proprietary drugs, mostly imported from Europe.
- Generics account for 60% of the market in volume and 45% in value.

■ Figures:

- High expenditure on pharmaceuticals compared to other parts of the world.
- High out-of-pocket expenses.



The Lebanese Context After 2019

- Severe socioeconomic and health crises started to affect Lebanon:
 - Political turmoil.
 - COVID-19 pandemic by the end of 2019.
 - Beirut blast 2020.

- Consequences:
 - Impoverishment of the population .
 - Limited access to foreign currency.
 - Subsidization lifted on most medications.
 - Severe shortages of medications.
 - Smuggling of subsidized products.
 - Deteriorated healthcare services.



Purposes of this Strategy

- Highlight the critical elements that need to be addressed in the planned National Pharmaceutical Sector Strategy that the Order of Pharmacists of Lebanon (OPL) intends to develop, in consultation with the main concerned stakeholders.
- Focus on contributing to Universal Health Coverage (availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality), within the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 targets.



Vision and Mission

- The vision of the National Pharmaceutical Strategy is to secure timely access for all patients (“leaving no one behind”) to quality, affordable, and safe medications without suffering financial hardships.

- The mission of the National Pharmaceutical Strategy is to:
 - Contribute effectively to UHC through universal and sustainable access to quality medications and ensure their rational use.
 - Ensure that the pharmaceutical sector develops steadily in line with the national health requirements and context.



Strategic Pillars

Securing universal and sustainable access to quality medications, including generics

Activating the role of patients' associations in decision-making

Ensuring early access to innovative medications while maintaining resource optimization

Promoting the rational use of medications by prescribers, dispensers, and consumers

Optimizing, expanding, and supporting the local industry by increasing its production capacities for local and export markets to include new therapeutic areas

Digitalizing the system: 2D barcode, Meditrack, HTA, electronic medical card

Optimizing human resources in the pharmaceutical sector through retention and education strategies

Implementing the Lebanese National Drug Administration to strengthen the regulatory process



Expected Outcomes

- Accessibility and availability of all types of medications in Lebanon.
- Affordability of essential medications to all, particularly vulnerable populations.
- Local production and importation of quality-assured pharmaceutical products.
- A concrete and transparent mechanism for public funds and insurance companies/TPP to cover treatments based on Health Technology Assessment (HTA).
- Assist the Lebanese government/regulatory authority in developing and implementing a time-bound roadmap for the transition between MOPH and the LDA.
- A “new” role of MOPH as a “tutoring authority”.
- A strategy of human resources through relevant training, education, and retention programs.



Potential Stakeholders

- Ministry of Public Health
- Pharmaceutical companies (scientific offices and distributors)
- Local manufacturers
- Health professionals (physicians, pharmacists, dentists, nurses, and others)
- Academia
- Third-party payers (private and public)
- Parliament
- Media
- Patient representatives (NGOs).

The support of the World Health Organization and the International Pharmaceutical Federation would also be necessary.



Principles and Values





GAP Analysis

What actually exists in Lebanon	What should happen
<p>Low trust in the government due to the lack of transparent decisions in the absence of long-term healthcare strategies.</p> <p>Collapsing state not able to find sustainable solutions related to availability of medications and other health services.</p>	<p>Leadership and governance: increase confidence in the health system and medications</p>
<p>Laws exist but are not fully implemented i.e. LDA, GMP Inspection of importing manufacturers, reimbursement of locally manufactured products according to MOPH price.</p>	<p>Legal bases for all activities and regularly updating the existing laws to be in line with the requirements of due process</p>
<p>Need the implementing decrees for LDA to be functional, need premises, staffing and budget.</p>	<p>Structure that puts plans and strategies</p>
<p>Absence of an explicit and clear decision-making process, that ensures efficient investments in health technologies, by public health insurance bodies</p>	<p>Clear and explicit decision-making process for assessing and investing in health technologies, ensuring efficient and equitable access to innovative treatments and quality care</p>
<p>Standard guides, specifications, and procedures are not fully developed. There is a need to develop many types of strategies, clinical guidance documents related to medications treatment modalities and priorities.</p>	<p>Standard guides, specifications, and procedures</p>



GAP Analysis

What actually exists in Lebanon	What should happen
Funding healthcare in general, and medications in particular, has been compromised by the economic depression and the sharp depreciation of the local currency. No new funding sources are identified yet.	Establish adequate and equitable funding mechanisms, for healthcare in general, and for medications in particular, such as an electronic medication card.
No structured national quality assurance system for the health system or products	Quality assurance system for the health system and products
Human resources competency to be assessed, and changes made according to the specialty and local needs	Competent and sufficient human resources to manage the system
The adequacy of the health workforce has not been assessed systematically yet, except for some personal initiatives, especially in the light of the significant brain drain generated by the economic depression.	More universal assessment of the workforce competencies, and appropriate changes through education would be suggested. Providing incentives for pharmacists to stay. Maintain health workforce for optimal service delivery, and develop policies aiming to retain the health workforce and reverse the brain drain.
Information system use is starting to be applied (barcode project). Existence of fragmented and parallel systems. Digital Health is not regulated.	Determine the fields that should take the priority to implement the information system and digital health



Targeted Levels and Strategic Goals

1. Product

- Enhance the quality of medications on the Lebanese market to increase trust in generics and available brands.

2. Funding

- Improve and ensure adequate, sustainable, and equitable funding for healthcare in general and medications in particular.

3. Access

- Improve universal and sustainable access by patients to medications (essential and innovative ones).

4. Workforce

- Optimize the competencies of administrators and healthcare professionals related to medication development, manufacturing, handling, and use.

5. Rational Use

- Promote the rational use of medications by prescribers, dispensers, and patients.
- Empower patients through awareness campaigns and communication.

6. Policy-Makers

- Involve policy-makers in all activities, including innovative projects and new models.
- Activate the Lebanese Drug Administration (LDA).

7. Digital Reform

- Digitalize all the steps related to the strategy, from development to waste management.



Expected Challenges

- Lack of good governance
- High prices of new medical products
- Weak regulatory mechanisms
- Shortages of essential medicines
- Inefficient supply management systems
- Low capacity to conduct HTA
- High out-of-pocket spending
- Irrational use of medicines
- Limited collaborations
- Lack of political will
- Lack of domestic funding
- Lack of exit strategies
- Political instability
- Economic instability



The Way Forward

Establish a **national technical committee** to identify priorities based on strategic goals, forecast expected challenges, and monitor the implementation progress.

The implementation plan will include:

- Strategic Goals.
- Needed Actions.
- Terms (Short, Medium, Long).
- Involved Stakeholders.
- Responsible Entity.
- Priority Level.
- Key Performance Indicators.





...Excellence in Pharmaceutical Care

-  **QUALITY**
-  **INNOVATION**
-  **AFFORDABILITY**
-  **TIMELINESS**
-  **ACCEPTABILITY**
-  **RATIONAL USE**
-  **ADVOCACY**





Thank you

*“Quality means doing it right
when no one is looking”*

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