


Driving Therapy Adherence for Improved Health Outcomes.

A Manifesto for the
European Elections 2019

Electronic copies of this Manifesto are available at:

Senior International Health Association (SIHA)
Rue Van Eyck 22 - 1000 Brussels, Belgium

www.seniorinternationalhealthassociation.org
contact@sihassociation.org



Driving therapy adherence for improved health outcomes: A Manifesto for candidate and future EU leaders

What is Adherence to Therapy?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines adherence to treatment as “the extent to which a person’s behaviour – taking medication, following a diet, and/or executing lifestyle changes, corresponds with agreed recommendations from a healthcare provider”.¹

Therapy adherence is a crucial component in the treatment of all diseases, especially chronic diseases affecting older adults, who often live with multiple comorbidities. Alarming, it is estimated that the adherence rate in people who are aged 60 or over is less than 60%.²

Why does it matter?

In the European Union (EU), it has been estimated that non-adherence to therapy is associated with almost 200,000 deaths, causing significant societal, emotional and physical costs. In addition to this astounding number of needless deaths, it has been estimated that the direct financial burden on the healthcare system alone is of EUR 80-125 billion.³

With 1 in 5 people in Europe being over 65, in order to sustain and promote the ever growing ‘silver economy’, it is imperative that an adequate policy response is launched to improve the quality of life and inclusion in society of our ageing population. We must:

- **Improve patients’ quality of life:** Poor adherence leads to an increased risk of reoccurring adverse events and avoidable hospitalisations that can have serious repercussions on people’s overall welfare and health outcomes.
- **Reduce healthcare costs:** Unnecessary treatment and/or hospitalisation due to a misuse or non-adherence to therapy can lead to avoidable costs to the healthcare system and society as a whole.

Although the problem of poor adherence has been extensively discussed in the past decade, a clear vision on how to address this compelling issue has not yet emerged. Senior International Health Association believes that the European Union could play a vital role in ensuring coordination of activities. This could take the form of exchanges of best practices among Member States on therapy adherence, supporting awareness and implementing educational initiatives to put adherence to the top of effective chronic disease management strategies.

SIHA (Senior International Health Association) is a non-profit organisation that represents older European citizens and those Europeans living with chronic diseases. Its mission is to promote the protection of the right to health of the elderly. To this end, it brings together the associations involved at European and international level to improve healthy ageing.

¹ WHO, “Adherence to Long-Term Therapies - Evidence for Action”, 2003, available at <https://bit.ly/2GMeEJe>

² Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU), “Targeting Adherence”, May 2008, available at <https://www.pgeu.eu/en/policy/5-adherence.html>

³ European Commission/MEDI-VOICE. MEDI-VOICE Report Summary. Project ID: 17893. European Union/European Commission

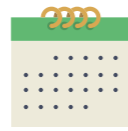
What's the call to action?

Given the challenges facing our ageing society in Europe, we call on all current, candidate and future leaders of the European Parliament, the European Commission and European Council to:



1. Ensure that Adherence to Therapy is recognised as a right for all people, especially those people living with chronic diseases.

People living with chronic diseases have the right to treatment adherence. The provision of accurate information, training opportunities and involvement in treatment decisions are essential factors that enable patients to optimally follow their treatment plan and avoid any deterioration of their condition.



2. Establish a "European Adherence to Therapy Day" as an annual opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of adherence to therapy among all relevant stakeholders; namely:

- The Patients, who should be adequately informed about the importance of adherence to treatment and the risks of non-adherence.
- Families and Caregivers, who can play a decisive role in supporting patients to adhere to treatment.
- Health Care Professionals, who can develop, with the help of patients, personalised approaches to improve adherence, impart accurate information in understandable ways and guide patients through their medical journey as a unified team of specialists, generalists, nurses, allied professionals and pharmacists - each with their own role to play.



3. Increase investments in scientific research that follows a patient-centred design, through Horizon Europe and other funding programmes.

- Medical and Healthcare organisations, who should develop national guidelines that take into account the difficulty of managing comorbidities through multidisciplinary care.
- The Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industry, to simplify medicine administration by being innovative and patient centric in their administration methods and devices.
- The Policy Makers, who should prioritise the health and welfare of their citizens whilst benefiting the health systems as a whole by developing policies to support adherence.

R&D on new treatments and therapies should be patient-centred, meaning that the European Commission and other EU funding institutions should prioritise studies and training pathways that involve patients early in the development process, in order to better adapt therapies to their everyday life.

Policymakers cannot fail to act in front of the challenges that come with our ageing society. Therapy adherence is an underestimated, yet fundamental leverage to improve patients' quality of life, while reducing healthcare spending. Join Senior International Health Association in supporting this European Manifesto on Adherence to Therapy!





The output of the European Manifesto

The Resolution to the European Parliament

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

Following Rule of Procedure 133 of the European Parliament
Establishment of a European Adherence to Therapy Day

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 8, 9, and 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the WHO Report “Adherence to Long-Term Therapies: Evidence for Action”¹,
- having regard to the European Charter on Adherence to Therapy²,
- having regard to Rule 133 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas recent demographic trends represent a challenge for health systems, with increasing proportion of senior citizens facing the need to manage comorbidities and chronic conditions³;

B. whereas poor adherence to therapy, beyond its negative impact on patients’ quality of life as it raises the risk of adverse events and hospitalisations, also has important economic consequences. In fact, today it is one of the main causes of inappropriate healthcare spending⁴;

1. Calls for the establishment of a “European Adherence to Therapy Day”, in order to raise awareness of the negative impact of poor adherence and on the benefits that come from an increased level of adherence to therapy as core element of personalised treatment and care.

1 https://www.who.int/chp/knowledge/publications/adherence_report/en/

2 <http://siha.cloud.agoramed.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/European-Charter-on-Adherence-to-Therapy-web.pdf>

3 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/140811/LDM_BRI\(2014\)140811_REV1_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/bibliotheque/briefing/2014/140811/LDM_BRI(2014)140811_REV1_EN.pdf)

4 <http://siha.cloud.agoramed.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/European-Charter-on-Adherence-to-Therapy-web.pdf>

