



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

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Media and Public Relations

Open letter from Management Board Chairs

Dear Guido,

Your term in office at the European Medicines Agency comes to an end in November 2020. You have given us nine years of excellent leadership and achievements as Executive Director of the Agency and the Management Board will miss your inspiration, professionalism, resilience – and your friendship.

Since you stepped into the role of Executive Director in 2011, EMA has continually reaffirmed its commitment to public and animal health. You have been a remarkable leader during an extraordinarily challenging period for EMA and the network, navigating not only the UK's withdrawal from the EU and EMA's subsequent move from the United Kingdom to the Netherlands, but now also the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your cooperation and communication with the Board every step of the way have been appreciated and, despite the many upheavals, you have achieved many impressive results.

Let us highlight just a few.

Undoubtedly, one of your key successes has been EMA's landmark policy on the proactive publication of clinical data. This policy sets a new gold standard for transparency in public health and pharmaceutical research and development globally and has changed the way we think about transparency in the pharmaceutical arena. Only through maximum transparency can we strengthen trust and confidence in the EU regulatory system that strives to protect and enhance public health in the EU. This is more important than ever as we start to see the approval of treatments and vaccines for COVID-19.

Your passion for innovation – with patients squarely at its heart - has also stood out. The EU Innovation Offices Network initiative, launched by EMA and the Heads of Medicines Agencies to support small and medium-sized enterprises and academic innovators, is an important example. In addition, EMA's PRIority MEdicines (PRIME) scheme, introduced under your leadership, has given Europe a powerful tool to support innovation that is now really delivering for patients. As of today, EMA has recommended the approval of twelve medicines supported through the programme for use in the EU, many of these to treat patients with rare diseases.

Also, in animal health, the European Surveillance of Veterinary Antimicrobial Consumption (ESVAC) network has grown substantially, from nine countries when you took office to 31 countries in 2020. The steady decrease in sales of veterinary antibiotics over the last decade shows that we are taking positive steps in our fight against antimicrobial resistance.

You have also ensured that EMA is fit for the future, by identifying areas that will be crucial for EMA's future and coming up with innovative ways to address these. You have created, with the EU national competent authorities, a task force for big data and invested more resources into the digitalisation of EMA, new scientific methods and technologies. You have led the development and finalisation of the Regulatory Science strategy to 2025 and you leave EMA a more 'agile' organisation thanks to the recent 'future proofing' exercise of the Agency.

During your tenure, you have put EMA firmly on the map by expanding the Agency's bilateral and multilateral collaboration with international regulators. You have served as chair of the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory Authorities (ICMRA) and have forged close relationships with public health authorities globally.

You said recently that it was your ambition to leave EMA fully prepared to embrace future scientific and technological advances for better human and animal health – we believe you have achieved that goal and more.

That future is now up to your successor, Emer Cooke, who will soon take the reins of the Agency. We have full confidence that Emer will continue to lead the Agency successfully in the years to come as we implement our European medicines agencies network strategy to 2025 in alignment with the European Commission's pharmaceutical strategy for Europe.

Guido, we wish you well with your future projects – and thank you, on behalf of the Board for all you have done over the past nine years to advance the health of the citizens in the EU.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature on file]

Christa Wirthumer-Hoche
Management Board Chair, March 2016 to present

[Signature on file]

Kent Woods
Management Board Chair, June 2011 to December 2015