The European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products

London, 6 June 2002
Doc. Ref: EMEA/CPMP/2348/02

PRESS RELEASE

1st EMEA/CPMP WORKSHOP FOR PATIENTS' ORGANISATIONS
"Information and participation"

On 31 May 2002, the EMEA with its Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products (CPMP) organised a workshop with representatives of seven European Patients' and Consumers Organisations. The list of participants is provided in Annex.

The objectives of this workshop were to reinforce communication with patients' representatives, to exchange views on information related to medicinal products and to further explore contributions to regulatory activities.

Mr. Thomas Lönngren, Executive Director of the EMEA, welcomed the participants, emphasizing the importance of this meeting as an additional initiative to improve EMEA transparency. Dialogue with Interested Parties started since the EMEA was created in 1995, but the need for new ways of interaction with Patients' Organisations has been recognised. Information provided to patients is a priority for the EMEA and is also an important aspect of the current review of the Community pharmaceutical legislation. It has also been highlighted by the High Level Group on innovation and provision of medicines - G10 Medicines group.

The meeting, chaired by Dr. Daniel Brasseur, Chairman of the CPMP, commenced with a general overview of the EMEA and the different transparency initiatives taken since its creation. Prof. Rolf Bass, CPMP Member, and Mr. Noël Wathion, Head of EMEA Post-Authorisation Unit, led the two following sessions devoted to the work of the CPMP within the European network, its impact on public health and the resulting information made publicly available by the EMEA. Mrs Lesley Greene, President of EURORDIS, introduced a session where speakers from patients' and consumers' organisations reviewed the need and expectations of the patients as well as their experience in contributing to product development and regulatory activities.

Discussion focused on the importance of providing information adapted to patients' needs, developing appropriate communication tools, and increasing the awareness of the public in relation to the use of medicinal products, particularly in the context of pharmacovigilance. Participants agreed to set up a working group within the Agency in order to make proposals for action at the EMEA level on the three identified areas.

Progress of the working group will be reviewed at a follow-up workshop to be held in 2003.

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For further information please contact:
Dr Isabelle Moulon, Head of Sector for the safety and efficacy of medicines for human use
Tel. (44-20) 74 18 84 43

7 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London, E14 4HB, UK
Tel. (44-20) 74 18 84 00 Fax (44-20) 74 18 86 13
E-mail: mail@emea.eu.int http://www.emea.eu.int