



The European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products
Post-authorisation Evaluation of Medicines for Human Use

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PRESS RELEASE

Meeting of the Herbal Medicinal Products Working Party

11-12 March 2002, EMEA London

The newly established CPMP Herbal Medicinal Products Working Party (HMPWP) met at the EMEA offices in London on 11-12 March 2002, for the first time in its new composition (i.e. newly nominated delegates, representatives, observers and experts), following the adoption of the new Mandate and Work programme (see annex 1 and 2) by the EMEA Management Board in December 2001.

An election of a new HMPWP Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson took place during this plenary meeting under the Chairmanship of Mr Thomas Lönnngren, EMEA Executive Director.

The HMPWP elected Dr Konstantin Keller as Chairman and Dr Heribert Pittner as Vice-chairman for a term of three years.

During the meeting the Working Party addressed a range of technical and organisational issues, the main elements of which are summarised below:

- The Points to Consider on Good agricultural and collection practices for Starting materials of Herbal origin (EMEA/HMPWP/31/99) was finalised by the Group and will soon be published on the EMEA Website.
- The Group heard a report and proposal from the European Pharmacopoeia on the extension of the EDQM Certification Procedure to Herbal drugs and Herbal drug preparations.
- Pharmacovigilance and safety issues related to *St John's Wort*, *Kava-Kava* and other herbal products have also been discussed at the meeting.
- In addition, the Group prepared comments on the proposed Annexes I-III to the Variation Regulations (EC) Nr 542/95 and 541/95, as amended in order to reflect particular requirements for herbal medicinal products.
- Finally, the HMPWP also held a general discussion on how to prepare for the implementation of the proposed Directive on Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products.

In order to implement the publication policy mentioned in the new mandate, a re-organised HMPWP folder structure will be launched on the EMEA Website beginning of next month. In addition, the following functional e-mail has been created for any queries on herbal related matters (herbal@emea.eu.int).

The next meeting of the working party is scheduled for 1-2 July 2002.

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Notes:

Konstantin Keller, German nationality, is a doctor in pharmacy. He is currently Head of Department “Particular Therapies” (Homeopathy, Phytotherapy, Anthroposophic Medicines, Traditional Medicines) at the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (Bfarm-Germany) and Chairman of the previous Working Party on Herbal Medicinal Products since 1997.

Heribert Pittner, Austrian nationality, is a medical doctor specialised in Pharmacology. He is currently Medical Assessor at the Federal Ministry of Social Security and Generations (Austria) and CPMP Delegate. He is also associate Professor, Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Vienna.