Marcin Rynkowski
Director
Department of International Cooperation
Ministry of Health
Republic of Poland
1. Fair pricing initiative – the background

a) Too high prices of medicines, especially orphan drugs, oncological drugs;

b) Prices nonadequate to cost of development, registration, production etc.;

c) Privileged position of pharmaceutical companies;

d) Weakened position of individual states in negotiations;

e) Limited access to medicines for patients;

f) Similar problems in many countries.
2. Multinational works

a) Sharing common problems;

b) Searching similar solvings;

c) Challenges:

- Differences in reimbursement systems,
- Differences in law systems,
- Political conditions;
3. Multinational works

d) Chances:

- Common position,
- Strengthening the position of individual countries in negotiations,
- Lower prices of medicines,
- Better availability for patients;
4. International initiatives

In the last few years the idea of ensuring fair and affordable prices of medicines has been the subject of several international initiatives. Attempts to cooperate in a similar position to the pharmaceutical companies have been undertaken by, inter alia:

- Benelux countries and Austria - so called BeNeLuxA (since 2015);
- Bulgaria and Romania (since 2016);
- Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland (Valetta Declaration, May 2017).

Initiative led by Poland is a part of an European trend of efforts in order to reduce prices of medicines.
5. Polish initiative

a) Polish Presidency within the Visegrad Group 2016-2017;

b) One of priorities of PLV4 is to maintain fair and affordable pricing of medicinal products;

c) Several countries involved:

• Poland,
• Hungary,
• Slovakia and
• Croatia,
• Lithuania,
• Slovenia.
6. Polish initiative - overview

a) Several expert meetings in Poland in 2016 (January, September, November)

- Identifying common problems, challenges,
- An overview of the legal systems in the individual members,
- Common international approach to the problem,
- An attempt to make a setting the scope of works and allocation of resources;
7. Polish initiative – overview

b) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

• A political declaration and a starting point for further works. It sets the framework of cooperation in the field of joint negotiations of medicinal products by focusing on selected technical and organizational details and defining objectives of cooperation,

• Signed on 3 of March 2017 in Warsaw during a meeting of Ministers of Health of the Visegrad Group and Croatia and Lithuania,

• Signed by Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia and Lithuania,

• Slovenia joined the initiative in April 2017 in written procedure.
8. Polish initiative – overview

c) Works

• Mutual cooperation between participants,

• Participating in expert meetings, exchanging information and general knowledge,

• Developing documents,

• Organising a meeting to review the level of accomplishment of works;
9. Polish initiative – overview

d) Results

• Pilot negotiations,

• Developing an official international agreement concerning fair pricing,

• Joint negotiations with pharmas to lower drug prices to the price acceptable to the partners.
10. Coordination Committee

a) Established under the MoU;

b) An expert body responsible for achieving objectives of the initiative;

c) Its main task is to develop the procedure of joint negotiations, the Guidance document, organize pilot negotiations and coordinate further development of an international agreement concerning fair pricing;

d) Representatives of all involved countries (up to five persons);
11. Coordination Committee

e) Chairman – representative of Poland;

f) Vicechairman – representative of Lithuania;

g) Regular meetings:

• 27-28 of April in Warsaw,

• 1-2 of June in Zagreb,

• 19 of September in Budapest,

• 26 of October in Vilnius.
12. Future

a) Short-term steps:

• At least three Coordination Committee meetings:
  ▪ End of 2017/beginning of 2018 Warsaw,
  ▪ I quarter of 2018 Bratislava,
  ▪ I half of 2018 Ljubljana,

• A review meeting by the end of February 2018;

b) Long-term step:

• International agreement (?)
Thank you for your attention!