



Capsulas

Medicinal products in election manifestos

On the proposals on medicinal products contained in the manifestos of the political parties for the forthcoming general elections in Spain

Background

General elections will be held in Spain on Sunday 23rd July. The next government will face important challenges in relation to medicinal products, including the revision of the Law on Guarantees and Rational Use of Medicines and Medical Devices and the follow-up to the revision of the European pharmaceutical legislation.

We have analysed the manifestos of the main political parties contesting the elections. Do they contain any proposals on medicinal products? Some manifestos do indeed contain interesting ideas.

Access to innovation

Regarding access to pharmaceutical innovation, the proposals of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and the People's Party (PP) are noteworthy. Both envisage the creation of a new agency for the evaluation of innovation and health technologies in Spain, known as "HispanICE". According to PP, the aim of creating this agency is to create a common, effective model for innovation and technology assessment, subject to the principles of transparency and the verifiable application of scientific evidence. PSOE, on the other hand, links the creation of this new agency to the objective of improving access to medicines, while ensuring equality and sustainability of the National Health System (NHS).

Another important part of access to medicines is the purchase of medicinal products once they

have been included in the pharmaceutical provision of the NHS. Most of the election manifestos do not contain specific or detailed proposals on this matter. Only PP proposes to encourage public procurement for innovation.

Pharmaceutical legislation changes in Europe and Spain

One of the key challenges awaiting the next government is the revision of European and Spanish pharmaceutical legislation. PSOE is committed to promoting a law that will bring regulations into line with the current and future needs and challenges of pharmaceutical policy for the NHS, within the framework of the EU's Pharmaceutical Strategy. Their intention is to promote a balanced and sustainable pharmaceutical ecosystem in the long term. One where access to innovative, generic and biosimilar medicines complements the availability of established medicines that still hold value within the NHS.

Another important development expected at European level in the coming years is the adoption of the Regulation establishing the European Health Data Space. This regulation seeks to provide a coherent, reliable and efficient legal framework for the use of health data in research, innovation, policymaking and regulation. PP is committed to working with the European Health Data Space to facilitate information exchange among Member States, in order to improve disease prevention and treatment, and to promote digital health management, personalised medicine and innovation.



Competences and health management

During this term of office, one of the key issues of the Ministry of Health was the Bill to Consolidate the Equity, Universality and Cohesion of the NHS. This bill included measures relating to co-payment of medicines or direct management of the entities affiliated to the NHS by the relevant administrations. This bill was paralysed due to the dissolution of Parliament and the call for elections.

SUMAR coalition advocates for protecting the public nature of the NHS and preventing any form of privatised management. PSOE is committed to passing a law that consolidates the equity, universality and cohesion of the NHS, thus strengthening the public healthcare system.

Regarding co-payments for medicines, SUMAR proposes their gradual elimination; while PSOE proposes their review, particularly for individuals with incomes below 18,000 euros.

Finally, VOX proposes recovering the health competences currently devolved to the Autonomous Communities and strengthening agreements with the private health sector.

Public intervention in the pharmaceutical sector

PP proposes to promote a law on the advertising of healthcare services and activities, aimed at both the general public and health professionals. The objective of this law is to guarantee that all communications in Spain promoting the contracting of any healthcare service or activity are objective, truthful and scientifically based.

SUMAR suggest the creation of a public pharmaceutical company to research, produce and market medicines, essential therapies and vaccines in the public interest. They also

propose ensuring the NHS's independence from the pharma industry, both in terms of training and research, and strengthening the role of the Spanish Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices ("AEMPS" by its Spanish acronym).

Vaccines

PP proposes to develop a National Vaccination Strategy, which will define and strengthen coordination mechanisms between administrative bodies in the event of a potential new mass vaccination need. This strategy aims to streamline the vaccine's evaluation, authorisation and pricing processes.

Cannabis legislation

PSOE proposes promoting the therapeutic use of cannabis by developing a pharmacological care system that allows patients to have therapeutic access to cannabinoids. On the other hand, SUMAR not only advocates for the legalisation of cannabis for medical purposes, but also for a comprehensive regulation of cannabis and the model of cannabis associations based on personal consumption and non-profitmaking.

Rare diseases and medical research

Regarding medical and biomedical research, several political parties have put forth general proposals. Both PP and PSOE propose improving the system so that patients have access to diagnosis and treatment for rare diseases, regardless of where they live, thereby eliminating unnecessary travel.

Finally, PP proposes the creation of a national database that would make it possible to track ongoing clinical trials in healthcare centres across Spain. Interestingly, this database was already created by PP in 2015 and is accessible on the AEMPS website.