

# 18 October: Healthcare/ Launch of a public consultation

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**Within the framework of its sector-specific inquiry into the distribution of medicinal products and the chemical pathology field, the *Autorité de la concurrence* launches a public consultation in order to collect contributions from the relevant professionals.**

On 21 November 2017, the *Autorité de la concurrence* decided at its own initiative to issue an opinion on the healthcare sector, and more specifically on how the medicines and laboratory testing (also known as chemical pathology) markets function.

The *Autorité* is today launching a wide-ranging public consultation, designed to contribute to the preliminary assessment drawn up following the initial investigation phase in the fields of distribution of medicinal products in urban areas and chemical pathology, with a view to adopting a final opinion in early 2019. It will be followed, in summer 2019, by a second opinion on setting the price of medicinal products.

## **Sectors at the heart of public policies which are undergoing major changes**

Public authorities attach particular importance to maintaining a high level of public health protection in our country. This objective has always been - and must continue to be - the focus of our concerns, particularly as regards the distribution of medicines in urban areas and the laboratory testing field. The healthcare sector is nevertheless confronting new competitive and economic challenges that require the assistance of public authorities.

Healthcare professionals are currently faced with the need to adjust their economic models, as a result of the major technological changes that have

taken place in the sector in recent decades (Internet development, telemedicine, online sale of medicines, innovative examining techniques...) and which patients are more and more requesting.

## **Reshape regulations to adapt them to new economic models**

A new mode of economic regulation taking this evolution into account would address a triple challenge: meet patient demand for quality healthcare throughout the country, continue to maintain a high level of public health protection throughout the country, and enable companies in France in the pharmacy and laboratory testing sectors to take advantage of economic opportunities offered by the European Union.

The first assessment drawn up by the Autorité highlights barriers to the adaptation of these sectors to change. The main obstacle is economic in nature. It stems in particular from the inability of certain companies to find the necessary funds to adapt to these changes and modernise their activity. The second obstacle concerns the outdated nature of applicable regulations, which are not always suited to the economic changes that these sectors are currently experiencing.

The public consultation is open until 18 November 2018. Pharmacists, doctors, nurses, intermediaries in the medicinal products distribution chain (wholesale redistributors, consignment services providers, central pharmaceutical purchasing bodies (CAP), group purchasing bodies (SRA), etc.), companies that are active in the mass retail distribution sector and/or over-the-counter personal hygiene and beauty products sector, chemical pathology specialists and anyone interested are invited to take part in the consultation.

**> To read the intermediary report, [click here](#)**

**> [Read the Q&A concerning the launch of the public consultation](#)**

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