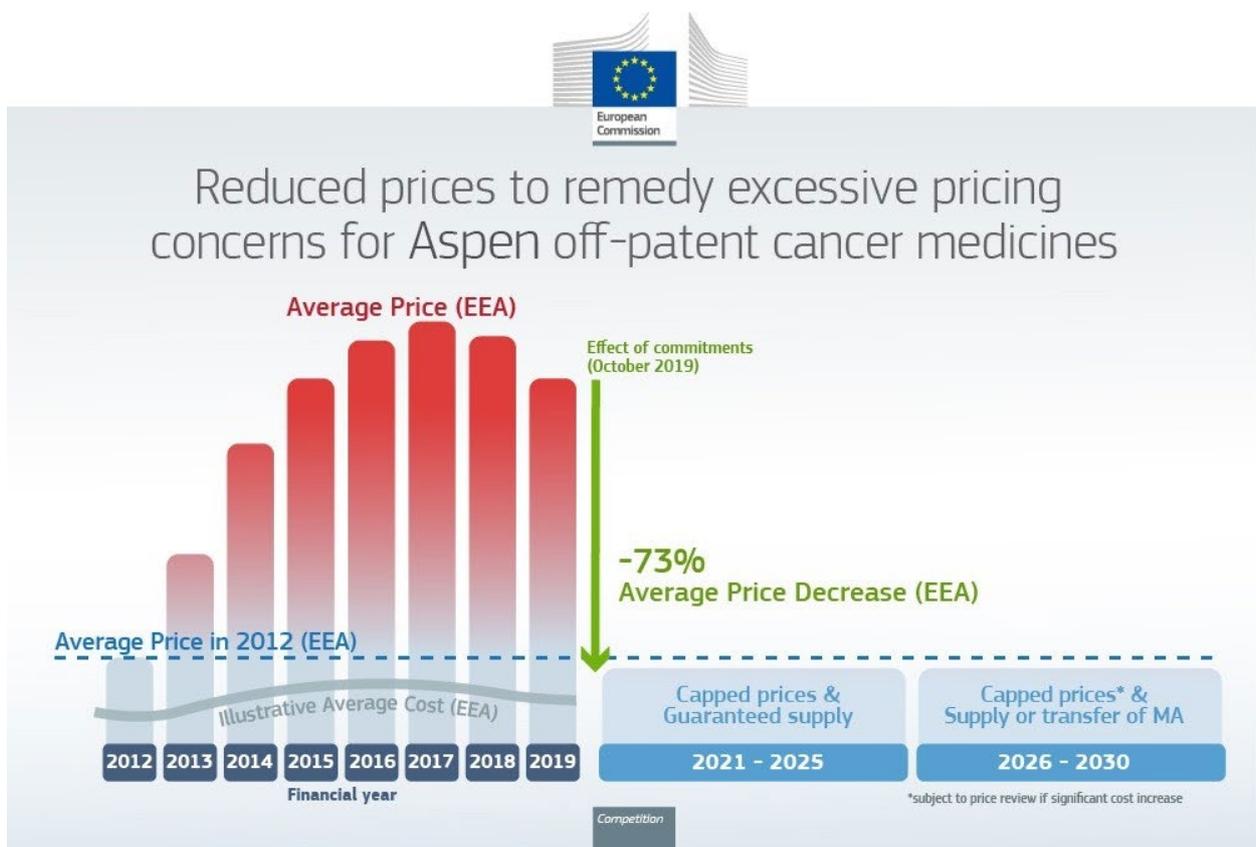


11 February 2021

ECL welcomes the European Commission’s decision to accept commitments by Aspen Pharmacare Holdings to immediately cut prices for 6 critical cancer medicines by 73%

The [Access to Medicines Task Force](#) of the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) **strongly welcomes** yesterday’s [decision](#) by the European Commission to accept commitments made by global pharmaceutical company Aspen to (i) reduce prices for 6 off-patent cancer medicines (by 73% on average across Europe for the next 10 years), and (ii) ensure continued supply of the medicines in all countries where they are currently sold for up to 10 years.



The decision follows a Commission investigation [launched](#) in 2017, amid concerns that Aspen had breached EU competition rules by abusing its dominant market position and charging unfair prices for essential medicines used in the treatment of haematological cancers.

ECL Director Wendy Yared reacted: “Cancer leagues were very glad that an investigation into the abusive practices of Aspen was taken up at the European level and stakeholders’ input sought. Yesterday’s landmark decision is the Commission’s first decision on unfair pricing in the pharmaceutical sector. The outcome of the Aspen case and the recently adopted [Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe](#) brings momentum to address effectively the long-standing and unacceptable issue of medicines’ high prices in the EU which put patients’ lives at risk”.

In July 2020, Aspen [proposed](#) to address these concerns in a bid to avoid a potential fine. In September 2020, ECL [submitted comments](#) to the European Commission on the commitments offered by Aspen, **which contributed to ensuring that the commitments would be implemented fast, effectively and for the long-term.**

Ward Rommel, Chair of the ECL Access to Medicines Task Force, said: *“Aspen’s pricing policy was jeopardizing cancer patients’ access to drugs they needed for their survival. We applaud the Commission’s decision to make Aspen’s commitments legally binding for the immediate benefit of patients and the financial sustainability of our healthcare systems. A strict enforcement of EU competition rules accelerates the quest to reach [fair prices and fair pricing](#) of life-saving and life-prolonging drugs. We hope that this gives a strong signal to the pharmaceutical industry that abusive pricing policies have no place in the EU, and that the consistent enforcement and implementation of competition rules will remain a priority of the European Commission in the coming years”.*

About ECL Access to Medicines Task Force

Established in 2016, the ECL Access to Medicines Task Force connects 30 national and regional cancer societies in 25 European countries, representing over 570 million Europeans. It aims to make safe and effective medicines available to all cancer patients in Europe, by insisting on accessibility, availability, affordability and increased transparency related to medicine prices, ultimately leading to sustainability of healthcare systems. The Task Force strongly believes in the power of constructive dialogue. We urge all stakeholders to push for accessibility to high quality treatments, improving both survival and the quality of life of cancer patients.

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