

Review of Activities of Estonian Pharmacies in 2007

Based on the type of their operation, pharmacies may be divided into three categories: general pharmacies, hospital pharmacies and veterinary pharmacies.

At the beginning of 2007 there were 323 general pharmacies (with a total of 200 structural units), 25 hospital pharmacies (plus 4 structural units) and 9 veterinary pharmacies (plus 1 structural unit). And at the beginning of the following year 2008 there were 317 general pharmacies (with 192 structural units), 24 hospital pharmacies (plus 5 structural units) and 8 veterinary pharmacies (plus 1 structural unit) 35% of general pharmacies were situated in bigger cities – Tallinn and Tartu. Eight out of the 29 hospital pharmacies were situated in Tallinn, 3 in Harju County, 3 in Eastern Viru County and 3 in Tartu. Each of the other counties had only 1 hospital pharmacy, with the exception of Valga and Võru Counties, which had no hospital pharmacies.

The total turnover of pharmacies is made up of the sale of medicinal products and other goods (medical devices, food supplements, herbal products, cosmetics and others). The gross turnover of all the active pharmacies and their structural units was 4026 million kroons in 2007. Of that, the turnover of general pharmacies constituted approximately 80% with 3246 million kroons, the turnover of hospital pharmacies was 19% with 761 million kroons, and the veterinary pharmacies had the smallest share in the total turnover – 19 million kroons which is less than 1% of the total turnover. Compared to the results of the year 2006, the turnover of the general pharmacies and hospital pharmacies increased by 16% and 25% respectively in 2007, while the turnover of veterinary pharmacies remained approximately the same.

	Turnover of medicinal products (millions of kroons)	out of the total turnover (%)
General pharmacies	2561	79
Hospital pharmacies	495	65
Veterinary pharmacies	8	40

The sale of prescription medicines may be divided into the sale of reimbursed and non-reimbursed medicinal products. On an average, reimbursed medicinal products make up 90% of the sale of prescription medicines. ~37% of the cost of reimbursed medicinal products were paid by patients and an average of ~63% by the Estonian Health Insurance Fund in 2007. During the past few years, the ratio has remained stable, i.e. the patient pays approximately 1/3 and the Estonian Health Insurance Fund approximately 2/3 of the price of reimbursed medicines.

Last year, every inhabitant of Estonia spent an average of 88 kroons per month on medicinal products. During the year, each inhabitant's own expenditure on medicines was just over 1000 kroons with 1056 kroons to be exact.

At the end of 2007, Estonian general pharmacies (incl. their structural units) employed 813 registered pharmacists, 563 assistant pharmacists and 492 other employees. A medium-sized general pharmacy has 1 to 2 registered pharmacists, an assistant pharmacist and an employee in other capacity. Hospital pharmacies employed 68 registered pharmacists, 26 pharmacy technicians and 35 people in other positions. A medium-sized hospital pharmacy has a staff of five people, while only a few bigger hospital pharmacies with structural units, employ more people. In veterinary pharmacies mainly veterinary doctors are employed. Nine active veterinary pharmacies employed 11 veterinary doctors and 4 other employees in 2007.

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