

# A critical eye

The non-profit French medical journal *Prescrire* has been publishing a selection of its articles in English for 30 years now. *Prescrire*'s English-language edition enters a new phase in 2022. With this issue you have before your eyes the newly redesigned *Prescrire International*. Its content will focus even more on what's new in the pharmaceutical field in Europe: new marketing authorisations, new pharmacovigilance data, and events affecting drug regulation and policy. As in the past, alongside detailed data and critical analyses, you will find viewpoints and opinions arrived at collectively by *Prescrire*'s editors.

The "Marketing Authorisations" section will devote more space to evidence-based critical analysis, focusing on new European marketing authorisations. *Prescrire*'s analyses are produced by an in-house editorial team, made up of healthcare professionals, and carefully structured to ensure that its workings remain completely independent of the pharmaceutical industry, health authorities and health insurers. A team that is prepared to say "bravo" or to rate a drug as "a real advance" when the editors' systematic analyses demonstrate that it represents an advance with concrete benefits for patients in the relevant clinical situation. And to brand a drug "not acceptable" when its benefits are minor or too uncertain compared with its dangers.

In order to produce these analyses, *Prescrire*'s editors follow a robust, time-tested method. A recap of this method always accompanies *Prescrire*'s annual review of "Drugs to avoid", the 2022 edition of which will be published in *Prescrire International* next month. This method allows a drug's shortcomings, some of which may be masked or concealed, to be detected, sometimes from the moment a new drug is introduced on the market. It systematically compares each new drug with the standard therapeutic options, drug-based or otherwise. It gives due emphasis to known or foreseeable and sometimes preventable harms, to practical considerations related to the drug's packaging, and to the specific needs of patients, including pregnant women, children and patients with specific conditions.

In its "Adverse Effects" section, the new *Prescrire International* will also devote more space to monitoring the latest news on drugs' adverse effects, and to the prevention of medication errors. This section includes short articles reporting safety signals detected around the world, alongside more detailed reviews.

The "Outlook" section keeps a watchful eye on events affecting the European pharmaceutical market, on medicines policy in Europe, and on drug companies' behaviour and influence. It also covers advocacy and actions by groups who, like *Prescrire*, are committed to advancing healthcare policy in the interests of patients.

In short, a "critical eye" on drugs in Europe, with patients' interests front and centre.

**Prescrire**