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**DIRECTORATE FOR FINANCIAL AND ENTERPRISE AFFAIRS
COMPETITION COMMITTEE**

Working Party No. 2 on Competition and Regulation

Competition and Regulation in the Healthcare Sector – Note by Kazakhstan

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Kazakhstan

Experience of Gradual Price Deregulation of Pharmaceutical Products in the Republic of Kazakhstan

1. The currently in place stringent price regulation system in the pharmaceutical market contributes to the withdrawal of medicines from the market and reduces its attractiveness in terms of introducing new pharmaceutical products. The Agency has implemented measures aimed at fostering healthy competition in the pharmaceutical distribution market.
2. In December 2022, the Agency, jointly with the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in active consultation with the business community, approved the Roadmap for the Development of Competition in the Healthcare Sector.
3. Within the framework of the roadmap, measures are provided to:
 - reduce excessive price regulation of medicines in the commercial segment.
4. Thus, in January 2023, the first stage of abolishing state price regulation was implemented for a range of over-the-counter medicines (topical ointments, drops, shampoos, etc.). The pharmaceutical market's response was closely monitored not only by the Agency but also by the authorized healthcare governmental body. In the first month of implementation, a price increase was observed for deregulated medicines; however, subsequently, prices began to decline under competitive pricing conditions.
5. Overall, there was a slight increase relative to the previously established price ceilings.
6. The second stage of price deregulation was launched in January 2025 (covering 952 medicines) and continued in July 2025, expanding to all over-the-counter products (1,707 medicines in total). The results also indicate that prices for 595 medicines decreased by an average of 10%, while 279 medicines experienced a price increase of 13%.
7. At present, within the third stage, deregulation has begun for prescription medicines priced up to one monthly calculation index, with completion planned for 2027.
8. In order to ensure a balance of interests between the state, patients, and pharmaceutical market participants, as well as to guarantee uninterrupted access to medicines under competitive conditions, the Agency is developing approaches for cooperation with the sectoral state healthcare authority and its subordinate organizations.
9. Overall, we believe that following the full implementation of all measures, the process of market entry for pharmaceutical products will be significantly simplified, government expenditures on medicine procurement will become more rational and optimized, and business entities will reduce their costs, which in turn will contribute to lowering the final price of pharmaceutical products.