

**Question for written answer E-008189/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)**

Subject: Reactionary proposals for 'self-diagnosis, self-medication and self-care'

Instead of addressing the serious understaffing and infrastructure problems facing public hospitals after years of inadequate funding and neglect, the strategic objectives and guidelines for reducing costs in the public health sector, as reflected in the 'Self-Care Manifesto' published by the Association of Manufacturers of Widely Used Pharmaceuticals, are now 'self-diagnosis, self-medication and self-care'.

Patients are being asked not to resort to medical assistance (except if necessary due to the progression of a disease) but to choose their 'treatment' by themselves so as not to burden the health system and to use non-prescription drugs – which of course they will pay for out of their own pockets. This will greatly increase the profits of pharmaceutical companies.

Moreover, proponents of 'self-medication' propose that health centres be replaced by pharmacies that would undertake to provide – for a fee – primary healthcare services, thereby creating false hopes among small self-employed pharmacists that they will be able to survive in the difficult conditions brought about by the deregulation of their profession.

Since the Commission, in its Third Health Programme 2014 - 2020, refers to **contributing 'to innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems'**, will it say:

How does it view these reactionary proposals for 'self-diagnosis, self-medication and self-care', which presuppose further cuts in health resources and a further degradation of public health, thereby multiplying the profits of pharmaceutical companies?