



AIFA in Milan: a new era of collaboration between the Agency and the Regions

Double institutional meeting today in Milan for the Italian Medicines Agency. The day began with a meeting of the Board of Directors, held for the first time in the Agency's history outside Rome, in the Sala Opportunità of Palazzo Lombardia in Milan. This choice marks the beginning of a new phase: AIFA is opening up to the Regions, strengthening dialogue with them and promoting a stronger and more structured institutional proximity.

In the afternoon, the conference 'Pharmaceuticals: the challenges of legislative innovation, research, and sustainability,' organised by AIFA in collaboration with the Lombardy Region, took place at the Belvedere of Palazzo Lombardia. This initiative opens up a new model of cooperation and dialogue between the Agency, local authorities, and the scientific community, with the aim of jointly addressing the challenges of the healthcare system: regulatory developments, governance, sustainability of expenditure and equitable access to innovative therapies.

The proceedings were opened by the President of the Lombardy Region, **Attilio Fontana**, the Undersecretary for Health, **Marcello Gemmato**, and the President of AIFA, **Robert Nisticò**.

'This meeting represents a concrete step towards strengthening collaboration with the Regions, with a view to the common goal of guaranteeing citizens' right to health and the sustainability of the National Health System,' said AIFA President **Robert Nisticò**. 'Working together is essential to govern innovation and ensure that citizens receive increasingly effective therapies in a fair and timely manner.'

AIFA Councillor and President of the Lombardy Region Welfare Commission, **Emanuele Monti**, one of the main promoters of this initiative, said: 'With this double institutional meeting, AIFA is opening a new season of collaboration with the Regions. Bringing the Agency to Milan means bringing the institutions closer to the territory and building shared pathways to ensure faster and more uniform access to medicines for patients. It is an important step towards a more modern and cooperative system.'

'Ensuring fair and timely access to medicines for all requires adequate resources, effective planning and close collaboration between the government, the Regions and the healthcare system. This is why opportunities for discussion such as the one promoted today by AIFA and the Lombardy Region are useful, as they help to build shared and truly effective policies,' said Undersecretary for Health **Marcello Gemmato**. 'Over the last three years, we have strengthened the National Health Service with the highest level of funding ever and introduced new organisational models, starting with more robust pharmaceutical governance capable of promoting research, innovation and care across the country. We have simplified procedures and reorganised AIFA to speed up processes and bring innovation to patients when and where it is needed. The work continues with the new Consolidated Law on Pharmaceutical Legislation and with tools that bring medicines closer to citizens, protecting

therapeutic continuity and the sustainability of the system. Only consistent and shared choices can guarantee a more efficient and fair healthcare system, for the benefit of all Italians,' concluded Gemmato.

The event was divided into three thematic sessions. The first dealt with 'Legislative innovation and the relationship between the State and the Regions', addressing the crucial issue of the integration of new pharmaceutical regulations and State-Region governance, a prerequisite for consistent and fair decisions on access to medicines. It delved into a phase characterised by numerous challenges for the sector, such as the legislative reforms underway in Europe and Italy, the construction of new governance models, and the full integration of information systems. **Marco Alparone**, Vice-President and Councillor for Budget and Finance of the Lombardy Region, **Alessandro Fermi**, Councillor for University, Research and Innovation of the Lombardy Region, **Carlo Riccini**, Director General of Farmindustria, and **Sandra Gallina**, Director General of SANTE at the European Commission, discussed how to guide this process of change.

The second panel discussion focused on the essential role of scientific research and the strategies to be implemented to transform innovation into concrete value for patients. The panel featured **Alessandro Padovani** (Past President of SIN), **Pasquale Perrone Filardi** (President of SIC), **Antonio Costanzo** (Full Professor of Dermatology at Humanitas University), **Giorgio Racagni** (Professor Emeritus at the University of Milan), and **Massimo Di Maio** (President of AIOM). The experts emphasised how structured dialogue between scientific societies, institutions and regulatory bodies is now essential to identify priority clinical needs, promote evidence-based assessment and ensure uniform access to innovative therapies.

In the concluding panel discussion, 'Drug policy between hospitals and the community', the topics of therapeutic continuity, adherence and community healthcare were at the centre of the debate between **Guido Bertolaso**, Councillor for Welfare of the Lombardy Region, **Mario Melazzini**, Director General of Welfare of the Lombardy Region, **Andrea Mandelli**, President of the Federation of Italian Pharmacists (FOFI), and **Annarosa Racca**, President of Federfarma Lombardia. The discussion focused on strategies for effectively integrating hospitals and the community, improving patient care and optimising resources, with local pharmacies increasingly becoming central hubs in the healthcare network.