

European paediatricians sound alarm over medicine shortage

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Paediatricians from European countries have raised the alarm over a shortage of medicines for children including antibiotics and asthma treatment, warning it was endangering health.

In a [letter](#) addressed to [health](#) ministers and seen by AFP on Saturday, the doctors stressed it was "urgent to find a fast, reliable and lasting solution" to the problems facing stocks in Europe.

"The health of our children and our youngsters is in danger because of the lack of medicines throughout Europe," they wrote.

The letter was addressed to the health ministers of Austria, France, Germany, the Italian region of South Tyrol and Switzerland.

It was co-signed notably by Andreas Werner, president of the French Association of Ambulatory Pediatrics, his German counterpart Thomas Fischbach and Laura Reali, head of the European Confederation of Primary Care Paediatricians.

The doctors said it was the responsibility of political decision-makers to guarantee sufficient production and supply to ensure medicines were available for basic paediatric care.

It is crucial to have antibiotics, [pain relief](#), fever and asthma medicines and vaccines available, they said.

Reacting to the letter on Saturday, German Health Minister Karl Lauterbach said on Twitter that the concerns were "justified".

A law aimed at tackling delivery issues is currently before the German parliament, he said.

Over the winter, Europe has seen shortages of the key antibiotic amoxicillin and other medications as surging illnesses particularly among children have increased demand for the drugs.

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