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## Medical technology in Europe: Key facts & figures

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### What is medical technology?

- Is used to prevent, diagnose, monitor or treat every disease or condition that affects us. Everyday examples include drug-eluting stents, MRI scanners, pacemakers, blood glucose testing kits, wound and incontinence management, and minimally-invasive surgical technology;
- Does not include medicines, biologics or vaccines;
- Is improving the quality of healthcare delivery and patient outcomes through earlier diagnosis, less invasive treatment options and reductions in hospital stays and rehabilitation times;
- There are around 500,000 medical technologies currently available to healthcare professionals, ranging from syringes and bandages to orthopaedic implants and pacemakers <sup>(1)</sup>.

### Enabling people to live healthy and productive lives

- Technology to control blood glucose levels reduces diabetes-related complications, such as blindness, by up to 76%, and nerve disease by up to 69% <sup>(2)</sup>;
- Hospital stays for minimally invasive treatment for aneurysms are nearly three days shorter than those for more invasive surgical interventions (4.5 days versus 7.4 days) <sup>(3)</sup>.

### Increasing the productivity and efficiency of healthcare systems

- 70% of health spending is consumed by personnel and hospital organisation costs. Compare that with medical technology which accounts for less than 5% <sup>(4)</sup>;
- On average, EU Member States spend 8.3% of their GDP on healthcare; yet medical technology accounts for only 4.2% of total healthcare expenditure, a proportion which has remained relatively constant for a number of years <sup>(5)</sup>;
- Between 1980 and 2000, medical technology reduced hospital stays by 56% and dramatically cut costs <sup>(6)</sup>;
- A patient fitted with an implantable cardiac device using remote monitoring saves an average of €450, with this figure rising as high as €1,000 in some countries <sup>(7)</sup>.

- Inserting drug-eluting stents reduces the requirement for repeat revascularisation procedures and incurs lower average costs for follow-up <sup>(8)</sup>.

## Contributing to economic growth

- The industry in Europe had sales of almost €95 billion in 2009; more than 30% of the global sales of medical technology. The European industry is growing at more than 5% per annum <sup>(9)</sup>;
- Around 8% of sales are reinvested into the research and development of new and improved products – more than €7.5 billion. This places the sector in the top tier of research investment in the EU <sup>(10)</sup>;
- There are around 22,500 medical technology companies in Europe; of these some 80% are SMEs employing less than 250 people; the total number of people employed approaches 500,000 <sup>(9)</sup>;
- Improvements in medical technology happen at a remarkable speed; on average a product will be superseded by an improved version within 18-24 months of introduction;
- In 2009 the medical technology industry filed more patent applications than any other sector - almost 16,500 - equivalent to more than 12% of the total number of applications in Europe <sup>(11)</sup>.

## References

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