

Interviews Xavier Molins, chair of Access VetMed

Headline: “Generic medicines are crucial to increasing the sustainability of veterinary medicine”

Subheadline: We interviewed Xavier Molins, chair of Access VetMed, who shares the benefits of generic medicines in veterinary healthcare and the challenges that these products face

News Body: “Generic veterinary medicines undergo rigorous evaluation by regulatory authorities to ensure they are equivalent to the original medication in terms of safety, efficacy and quality.” This is what Xavier Molins, chair of Access VetMed, told us at AnimalCare when we asked him about these pharmaceutical products. The active ingredient is the same as in a branded medicine, but generics offer a wide range of benefits, as Xavier Molins explained.

Access VetMed has been representing the generic veterinary medicine industry for over two decades, emerging out of an urgent need: to establish an association that would promote a harmonised system within the European Union. Since then, the organisation has been working to defend the generic medicine industry in Europe and raise awareness of the benefits of these products, which, as its chair told us, “are numerous.”

Xavier, how important are these products to improving animal health and welfare?

The benefits of generic veterinary medicines are numerous. First, they provide a more affordable option for pet owners and the livestock industry, making quality treatments more accessible at a significantly lower cost. This is especially relevant in the European context, where veterinary care costs can be considerable, and access to effective treatments is essential to ensure animal welfare. Additionally, generic medicines promote competition in the market, which can help reduce overall prices and increase the availability of treatment options.

Finally, generic medicines are a key tool for increasing the sustainability of veterinary medicine. Thanks to their increased accessibility, more animals can receive proper care, providing for improved animal health, greater food safety and a more efficient production environment.

Access VetMed represents the generic veterinary medicine industry in Europe. How has this industry grown in recent years?

The generic veterinary medicine industry in Europe has experienced significant growth in recent years. For example, the market authorisations for generic veterinary medicines in Spain accounted for 32.5% in 2014 and have increased to 42.2% today. The growth is even

more remarkable at the European level, where generic veterinary medicines now represent nearly 50% of all market authorisations.

This growth has been further supported by a more favourable and clearer regulatory framework in Europe and increased market competition. As more companies have become involved in manufacturing generic medicines, treatments have become more widely available, reducing overall costs and improving access to veterinary care. Additionally, this increase in competition has driven innovation within the industry, with the development of new formulations and improvements in product distribution and access.

Is it expected that these figures will continue to grow and, therefore, that these products will continue to offer more benefits for animal health?

Yes, growth is expected to continue in the coming years, which will, in turn, bring increasing benefits for animal health. This growth will be driven by several key trends pointing towards greater adoption of generic medicines in both the veterinary sector and the livestock industry.

First, economic pressure in many regions, coupled with growing concerns about the costs of veterinary treatments, will continue to drive demand for more affordable alternatives without sacrificing quality. Additionally, as authorities continue to strengthen and simplify approval and oversight processes, it is likely that more generic medicines will enter the market, expanding the options available to veterinary professionals and improving treatment accessibility for more animals.

In the generic veterinary medicine industry, how important are innovation and technology?

Although generic medicines contain the same active ingredients as branded products, innovation and new technologies in areas such as formulation, manufacturing and distribution enable generic companies to offer medicines that meet the same safety, efficacy and quality requirements as the original products but at a much lower cost.

For example, improvements in pharmaceutical forms or controlled release of active ingredients can enhance the effectiveness of treatment and improve adherence to treatment by livestock producers and pet owners. Technological innovations can also make medicines easier to administer, improving animal welfare and facilitating their use in veterinary clinical practice.

Has the introduction of artificial intelligence and new technologies improved the development of these products? How has this technology changed their development?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a relatively new technology, so it is still a bit early to assess all the benefits it may offer to the generic veterinary medicine industry. However, it is certain

that, along with other new technologies, it will significantly enhance the development of generic veterinary medicines, enabling advances in research, more efficient production, distribution, treatment customisation and improvements in product traceability and safety.

For example, AI will allow medicinal product developers to identify equivalent active ingredients or formulas that may be useful in manufacturing generic medicines more quickly and accurately. Similarly, handling large volumes of data on the efficacy of medicines and their potential side effects will improve accuracy when selecting the most promising products to be developed.

In addition to growth and improvement, are there still challenges to face? What are they?

One of the main challenges still lies in the perception and acceptance of generic medicines in certain sectors of the market. In this regard, ongoing education about the benefits of generic medicines and building trust in the industry are key to overcoming this obstacle.

Another important challenge is related to regulatory and legal barriers. While European authorities have certainly made progress in creating a clearer framework for generic veterinary medicines, differences in regulations across countries and approval processes can still pose a challenge.

In terms of competition and economic sustainability, as the generic medicine market grows, so does the competition, which can put pressure on profit margins. This can be a challenge for smaller manufacturers, who must continue to innovate and maintain high quality standards while competing with large pharmaceutical corporations.

Finally, another relevant challenge is the global access to generic medicines, especially in smaller markets or rural and remote areas. Despite advances in distribution, it is still not possible to access quality medicines in certain places, which can affect animal health in less privileged regions. Improving logistics, distribution infrastructure and medicines access policies in these areas is a crucial challenge.

What are Access VetMed's commitments as a representative of the generic veterinary medicine industry?

As a representative of Access VetMed, I want to emphasise the crucial role that generic veterinary medicines play in improving access to animal health in Spain and across Europe. We are committed to continuing to promote products that are not only more accessible but also guarantee the same quality and efficacy as branded medicines, for the welfare of all animals.

Finally, I also want to highlight the importance of collaboration among the different stakeholders in the industry, from manufacturers and regulators to veterinary professionals, farmers and pet owners. Only by working together can we continue to advance sustainability

and innovation within veterinary medicine and ensure that animals receive the best possible care, regardless of their location or the economic context.