

# Unconventional pharmacy

When, how, why .....

Since 1996, a project to reorganize the pharmaceutical sector was under discussion in the Senate (XII Commission), rapporteur Anna Maria Bernasconi (S. 1505,). The initial intention of the Government (I Prodi Government) and of the majority was to make access to the ownership of pharmacies fairer, but the strong interests involved were slowing down and diminishing the reforming scope of the initial project. The position in the Senate of the MNLF at the resumption of the debate (September 22, 1999) was extremely harsh against the attempt to empty its ([TESTO](#)) At the end of the first Prodi government and with the election of the new Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema (October 21st 1998) the hopes were rekindled, the inaugural speech by the new premier about who was "born with the wrong shirt" was famous. In this parliamentary climate Vincenzo Sica (Ulivo) in the Chamber and Francesco Carella (Verdi) in the Senate and other members of the majority were determined to change a legislative situation that had its roots in 1934: pharmacies were inherited, very little competition, the absolute monopoly on drugs

The unconventional pharmacy comes from a project by Fabio Romiti and Francesco Livigni coordinated by Vincenzo Devito in the summer of 1998 in Sicily.

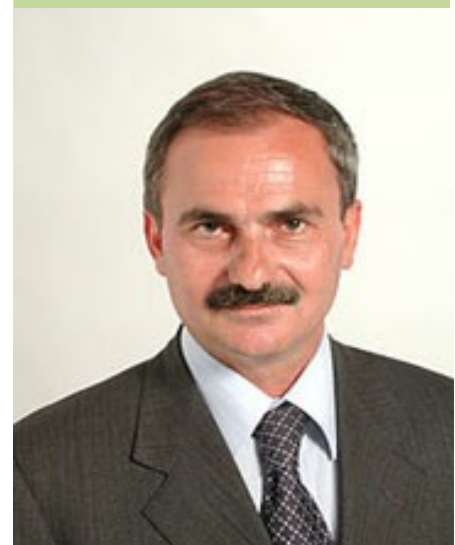
That summer, in view of the resumption of the debate on the reform of pharmaceutical distribution in the Hygiene and Health Commission, the MNLF feels the need to make a strong proposal and after endless discussions that began early in the morning and ended late in the afternoon, Livigni and Romiti delivered the text to the top of the Movement.

A revolutionary text for those times, the centrality of pharmacy in the distribution of drugs is eliminated, the drug-pharmacy combination replaced by the new legislative concept based on the drug-pharmacist relationship.

It is not the walls where the professional exercises that legitimize his profession, but it is the professional himself who legitimizes his activity regardless of where he.



Vincenzo Sica Member of the Chamber



Francesco Carella President of the Hygiene and Health Committee of the Senate

MNLF Occupation of the F.O.F.I.



MNLF Hunger strike May 2000



The project responds to two needs written on the Constitution and that have always represented the theoretical basis of the action of the Free National Pharmacists Movement: the first recognizes the right of the State to organize the pharmaceutical service on the national territory and to choose the number and actors who in their name realize the distribution, the second guarantees the constitutional principles of

equal social dignity and freedom of enterprise (Art. 3 and 41) and therefore the free professional practice through the introduction of an unconventional pharmacy.

In Unconventional pharmacy inserted in the project the pharmacist can dispense all the drugs, even those with prescription, paid directly by the citizen.

*It is not the walls where the professional exercises that legitimize his profession, but it is the professional himself who legitimizes his activity regardless of where he*

Rome, 30 May 1999, Hotel Ergife, II Congress MNLF



Senate Red Room Press Conference 2002



A dual system of drug distribution that combines the need for an equitable distribution of drugs throughout the country through the national health system, but at the same time, ensures competition between the different actors and therefore the use of all the levers to improve the quality supply and competitiveness.

The text remains "in the drawer" for four years, or does not translate into legislative activity, but circulates in the environments and already in 1999 in Rome at the Ergife Hotel on the occasion of the II Congress of MNLF we begin to talk about "dual system of drug distribution,

"The project becomes a bill and is premiered in the red hall of the Senate in November 2002.

First signatory Francesco Carella, to which are added many senators of the majority and opposition, including Nicola Mancino.

The text organizes the distribution and access to the approved pharmacy but, as already mentioned, establishes a new system of distribution of the drug through the unconventional pharmacy. (TESTO) . The reaction of the category is of extreme interest on the one hand and of total closure on the other (pharmacy holders).

Then comes the Bersani decree and the first real liberalization of the sector for self-medication, the MNLF after a demonstration in support of the decree, is received by the Ministry, the only request is the mandatory presence of the pharmacist that was originally not intended. The first parapharmacies are opened and we must defend ourselves from the attempt to empty the provision by preventing the delivery of drugs by distributors. The MNLF denounces the practice to the Italian Competition Authority and the Authority condemns some companies companies.

MNLF 2006, Demonstration in defense of the Bersani decree before the Ministry of Economic Development. MNLF delegation calls for the mandatory presence of the pharmacist



Strike Pharmacies and protests, police deployed and some small scuffles in Rome 2006



### Farmacie scioperano

The union of the owners of pharmacies calls to collect their members and declares the general strike of pharmacies to which some regional federations do not participate. On the day of the strike, a demonstration in Rome registers some moments of tension. Among the protesters also Mr Maurizio Gasparri and part of the right. Maurizio Gasparri and the Hon. Tomassini during the Berlusconi government, will sign a bill that attempts to remove the obligation of the presence of the pharmacist in parapharmacies, de facto impoverishing the law and allocating the parapharmacies to the closure. The attempt fails due to opposition from the union of consumer movements and the MNLF

## The liberalization of C-band drugs passes to the Chamber of Deputies

The liberalization of C-band drugs is essentially a less structured variant of the unconventional pharmacy. Liberalizing prescription drugs paid directly by citizens allows that free exercise of the profession contained in the original project.

In the second phase of the process of liberalization of the sector desired by Minister Bersani and the Prodi government, the liberalization of drugs in band C is expected (with recipe paid directly by citizens). An amendment by the Hon. Sergio D'Elia (Radicals) in favor of liberalization is approved by the Chamber of Deputies (November 2007) and in the Congress of Rimini the MNLF is registered the strong desire to complete the legislative process.





Rome, 18 April 2010 MNLF event

Unfortunately the Prodi government falls (2008) and the provision approved by the Chamber of Deputies is not confirmed in the Senate.

The subsequent elections are won by the center-right, the Berlusconi government is established and attempts are being made to cancel the entire liberalization plant (Gasparri-Tomassini).

With the financial crisis of 2011 Berlusconi is forced to resign, in its place is elected Mario Monti, former EU commissioner of competition that the MNLF had met during the work of reform of liberal professions in Brussels.

Monti also includes the liberalization of C-band drugs in the measures of "Cresci Italia", but the evening before the parliamentary discussion of the provision the text is replaced ex novo with the inclusion of the extraordinary competition for new pharmacies and the decrease in quorum for opening of a pharmacy. The text also includes two amendments prepared by the MNLF for the sale of all veterinary medicines, including those with a prescription and the possibility for parapharmacies to set up a galenic laboratory to prepare non-prescription galenic products.

Of course, the contest promised 5000 new pharmacies has failed and has not yet been completed. Less than 1000 pharmacies have been opened.

The history of the unconventional pharmacy and of the liberalization of the C-band drugs does not end here, numerous have been the manifestations and the requests to the politics so that the right to free exercise of the profession is accepted.

And the story continues ...

