



WHPA Briefing on combating counterfeit medical products

August 2010

NEWS



COUNTERFEIT AND FALSIFIED MEDICINES THREATEN PUBLIC HEALTH

IPR concerns should not cloud this global health issue

Given the heated and lengthy discussions on counterfeit and falsified medical products that took place during the recent 63rd World Health Assembly, the World Health Professions Alliance **WHPA** has voiced its concerns that patient safety and public health are being overlooked in favour of trademark concerns. All five CEOs of the WHPA partner organizations, representing 26 million health professionals worldwide, have spoken out on this issue. [More](#)

WHPA ISSUES JOINT STATEMENT ON COUNTERFEITING

The WHPA has stepped up its commitment to fight the dangers posed by counterfeit medical products among health professionals, consumers and patients and their national governments. In March 2010, WHPA issued a joint statement on counterfeiting of medical products. [More](#)

A NEW, PRACTICAL TOOL FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Health professionals worldwide have a new resource to assist them in the fight against counterfeit medical products. Launched in May 2010, the 'Be Aware, Take Action' toolkit seeks to help educate and improve the capacity of health professionals to detect, report and prevent counterfeit medical products. Three target audiences are catered for – health professionals, patients and public health advocates. [More](#)

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN CENTRAL AMERICA TO TACKLE MEDICINE SAFETY

The first *Be Aware, Take Action* 2010 health professionals' workshop on counterfeiting of medical products is planned for 19 October in San José, Costa Rica. It will bring together health professions organization representatives to share information, experience and best practices on the counterfeit medical products situation and to discuss how to stem the infiltration of counterfeits in the region. [More](#)

RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Focus on Counterfeit Drugs

In April this year *Nature Medicine* carried a special section 'Focus on Counterfeit Drugs', with national perspectives, anti-counterfeiting activities and several articles highlighting the issue of counterfeit anti-malarials (Nature Medicine April 2010 Volume 16 No 4 pp347-489) [More](#)

Are there counterfeit medicines in Croatia?

While there have been no recorded cases of counterfeit medicines in the legal supply chain in Croatia, medicines without marketing authorisation in Croatia, could be found on the illegal market. [More](#)

UAE Health Ministry demands that pharmaceutical companies to appoint pharmaceutical vigilance officer

29 April 2010: The medical practices and licenses sector at the UAE Ministry of Health issued a decision to demand all pharmaceuticals and medicine companies registered at the Registration and Pharmaceutical Drugs Department to appoint a pharmaceutical vigilance officer in their organizations within six months. by Lama Owais [More](#)

Dangers of buying prescription medicines over the Internet

04 May 2010: Buying prescription medicines on the Internet may be easily done, but the Irish Medicines Board (IMB) advises there are serious concerns for the safety of persons who purchase prescription medicines in this manner. There is no way for the purchaser of knowing where the website is based, from where it sources the medicines, or the quality, safety or effectiveness of the medicines supplied. [More](#)

Cameroon SFDA exposes 30 websites

17 May 2010: The Cameroon State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA) issued 2010 First Safety Warning Announcement Regarding Buying Medicines Online and exposed 30 websites releasing false drug information and selling counterfeit or substandard drugs. [More](#)

FDA warning on phony Tamiflu

17 June 2010: The FDA warned consumers that a phony version of an antiviral drug being sold on the Internet could spark a harmful reaction in some people. [More](#)

Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration issues counterfeit warning

21 June 2010: The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is investigating the source of the counterfeit Viagra (sildenafil) that has been supplied in Australia and has entered the wholesale/pharmacy supply chain. [More](#)

WELCOME

This is the first edition of *WHPA Briefing on combating counterfeit medical products* for WHPA partners and their member associations. It covers current developments concerning medicine safety and counterfeit medical products, including information about the ongoing work of the WHPA counterfeit medical products campaign and noteworthy national and international developments and findings. Your contributions are welcome, if you would like to share your experiences in the fight against counterfeit medical products [contact](#).

COMING EVENTS

28 August - 2 September 2010 **FIP Congress 2010 Libson, Portugal**

2-5 September 2010 **FDI World Dental Federation Annual Congress Salvador da Bahia, Brazil**

8 September 2010 **World Physical Therapy Day www.wcpt.org/wptday**

12 September 2010 **World Oral Health Day**

26 September 2010 **World Heart Day**

13-16 October 2010 **WMA General Assembly Vancouver, Canada**

Some key dates in EU activities

27 April 2010: European Parliament public health committee backs new measures against illegal sale of medicines over Internet. July 2010: Full sitting of European Parliament to vote on Falsified Medicines Directive. Sept. 2010: First parliamentary reading of Falsified Medicines Directive. [More](#)

CONFERENCE ROUNDUP

World Health Assembly intervention

The World Health Professions Alliance was present at the 63rd World Health Assembly, held in Geneva from 17-21 May 2010. On the subject of counterfeit medical products, FIP spoke on behalf of the five WHPA member organizations and stressed that all of us, as health professionals, have a common goal to protect the well-being of patients in all parts of the world from poor quality, substandard and counterfeit medical products. [More](#)

International conference on counterfeits paves the way to convention aimed at protecting public health

16 April 2010: More than 140 participants, senior officials from health, law enforcement and judicial authorities from around 40 states, international organisations and institutions from around the world came together on 15 and 16 April 2010 in Basel to discuss the practical implementation of the future Council of Europe **MEDICRIME** Convention. [More](#)

International workshop on safety medicine monitoring system ends in Accra, Ghana

12 May 2010: The first West African Health Organisation (WAHO) workshop on Pharmacovigilance Systems in West Africa, aimed



US announces crackdown on counterfeiting

22 June 2010: The White House unveiled a strategic plan to combat counterfeiting and piracy through increased intellectual property enforcement efforts. [More](#)

WCO Secretary vows to fight counterfeit drugs

24 June 2010: Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the World Customs Organization, signed a declaration demonstrating his group's commitment to crack down on the counterfeit drug industry. [More](#)

At the same event former French President Jacques Chirac stated, "Let's not ever forget that when a falsified product is bought, the consumer is the victim. No one knowingly buys a product that could threaten his life or that of one of his loved ones...A mother who buys fake medicine to treat malaria does not know that she is paying for her own death or that of her sick child. It is for that woman, and for that child, that I call for action today on the part of everyone." [More](#)

Uganda NDA seizes counterfeit drugs

8 July, 2010: The Uganda National Drug Authority has recovered 54 boxes of counterfeit drugs from a clinic in Iganga town. Zaidi Mwendha, the coordinator, said the drugs were worth UGX34m (USD 15,000). [More](#)

METAKELFINE use in Tanzania suspended

13 August, 2010: The Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) has suspended the importation, distribution, sale and use of Metakelfin an anti-malarial medicine due to presence of counterfeit tablets in Tanzania market. [More](#)

WHPA COUNTERFEIT MEDICAL PRODUCTS CAMPAIGN

With WHPA "Be Aware, Take Action" we provide dentists, nurses, pharmacists, physicians and physical therapists with tools and strategies to advocate for appropriate investments in the education and capacity building of health professionals to detect counterfeits and to safely inform colleagues and patients. [More](#)

at strengthening medicine safety monitoring systems in the sub-region was held in Accra. The four- day workshop was organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Advocacy and Training in Pharmacovigilance, in collaboration with the mother organisation (WHO) and Sweden-based Uppsala Monitoring Centre (UMC). [More](#)

ABOUT WHPA

The World Health Professions Alliance speaks for more than 26 million health care professionals worldwide, assembling essential knowledge and experience from the key health care professions in more than 130 countries. [More](#)

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USEFUL LINKS

World Health Professions Alliance [WHPA](#)
WHPA 'Be Aware, [Take Action](#)' campaign
WHO website on [counterfeit medicines](#)
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Photos courtesy of FIP, PSI, Pfizer, Inc, and Lilly.

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International Council of Nurses
www.icn.ch



International Pharmaceutical Federation
www.fip.nl



World Confederation for Physical Therapy
www.wcpt.org



FDI - World Dental Federation
www.fdiworldental.org



World Medical Association
www.wma.net