

Fight the Fakes Campaign Holds 2nd Partners Meeting in Geneva

On October 7th, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) hosted the 2nd Fight the Fakes Partners Meeting at their Geneva, Switzerland headquarters. The meeting, presided over by IFPMA's Assistant Director General, Greg Perry, was attended (both in person and via teleconference) by campaign partners from across Europe and the United States (including members of IFPW's staff.)

Several key takeaways arose from the day-long meeting, including: 1) Continued efforts to raise awareness and commitments to the campaign on an international level, in particular, the concept of having an official World Health Assembly delegation and a flagship side event every year to assist in giving the Fight the Fakes campaign higher visibility, was welcomed by all partners so that the campaign could increase its global reach; and, 2) Increase visibility and engagement on a local level...partners were challenged with the task to explore their own networks for opportunities to organize activities and raise awareness on a grass roots level within their own organizations.

Additionally, there was a strong consensus among the partners that the branding of the Fight the Fakes campaign should remain as is, given its worldwide recognition already in place. It was agreed that the issue of substandard medicines should be included in the campaign's messaging, as ultimately both falsified and substandard medicines pose significant harm to patients. In order to incorporate more messaging around substandard medicines, more content would be published around this issue. The campaign's joint statement will be amended to include an addendum addressing the substandard medicines issue, along with an explanation of the distinction of substandard versus falsified medicines.

Another key consensus among the partners was that it would be extremely beneficial to have private sector partners included in the campaign. Their inclusion would not only boost the campaign through financial contributions, but also through their expertise on the local level. It was decided that these private sector partners would need to undergo a comprehensive vetting process so that the integrity of the campaign could be maintained. There would also need to be significant monitoring and evaluation to ensure that no political lines were crossed which could jeopardize the campaign's standing with important organizations such as the World Health Organization. With the concerns of the partners in mind, the Fight the Fakes Secretariat will begin the process of outlining potential private sector involvement.

A decision was made that, in order to continue with the limited resources at the campaign's disposal, partners would need to become more active in financing the campaign so that there could be a more sustainable and greater financial resources available to the campaign. Potentially, the new campaign governance structure would involve an overall steering committee that would oversee the secretariat and membership. Public affairs and technical agencies

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In Brief...

- ◆ In its effort to collect unwanted and unused medications, **Walgreens** has collected more than 885 tons of unwanted prescriptions as of Aug. 31. "We are proud to be the leader in making 'drug take-back day' available every day, just as we are grateful to the organizations across the health care community who have joined us to address the opioid epidemic," said *Rick Gates*, senior vice president of pharmacy and health care, Walgreens. "We recommend everyone utilize drug disposal options available throughout their community or participate in DEA's *National Prescription Drug Take Back Day* in an effort to safely dispose of unwanted medications." Walgreens has been working with **AmerisourceBergen, Pfizer** and **Prime Therapeutics** to expand the availability of the kiosks nationwide. Currently, there are more than 1,500 kiosks in 46 states and Washington, D.C.

- ◆ Swiss pharma company **Novartis** announced that it is setting up a dedicated Novartis AI (artificial intelligence) lab to move forward in its bid to be a sector leader in the fast-emerging technology. The five-year collaboration will involve projects across the business, helping to transform not only drug discovery, but also in drug development and in commercial activities.

- ◆ New technology that will enable consumers to read packaging labels in any language will be available in twelve months, according to **Third Aurora** digital marketing specialist, *Dave Chaffey*. The technology, which is slated to begin rolling out in early 2020, will involve a solution that will translate from English into more than a hundred languages. Artificial intelligence will read and interpret the content while augmented reality projects the new text back onto the label, all powered with the use of a smartphone. In addition

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Merck's CEO: When it Comes to Drug Pricing and Politics, Pharma is in the "Crosshairs"

(Source: An Article by Eric Sagonowsky for FiercePharma)

Merck CEO Ken Frazier is no stranger as to how the political "game" is played, and he is keenly aware that today's political climate presents significant industry challenges in the coming year.

Speaking at Yahoo Finance's All Markets Summit, Frazier noted that pharma is "right in the crosshairs" as politicians and lawmakers discuss ways to lower prescription drug prices. Candidates have voiced various ideas to fight the high prices, and Frazier said that some are "legitimate plans" while others will "hurt innovation".

Drug pricing proposals under consideration include Medicare negotiations, importation, fines for excessive price hikes and more.

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Fight the Fakes (cont.)...

would also be needed to help with online presence, resources and material/collateral as well as other fields of expertise.

Several strategic events are slated between now and the end of the year, including the following:

World Health Summit, 27-29 October

World AMR Congress, 7-8 November

Fight the Fakes Week, 2-8 December

Universal Health Coverage Day, 12 December

IFPW member organizations are encouraged to participate in these important events, especially Fight the Fakes week, so that we can better raise awareness about falsified and substandard medicines and their deadly consequences. More information will be sent for these events very soon.

If you would like more information about the Fight the Fakes campaign, please visit www.fightthefakes.org. You may also email Christina Tucker at c.tucker@ifpwfoundation.org or secretariat@FightTheFakes.org.

Merck CEO (cont.)...

The pharma industry, for the most part, has worked tirelessly to highlight how new drugs are advancing patient care and helping reduce overall healthcare expenses.

At the event, Frazier also touched on a recent Gallup poll that found pharma ranks dead last among 25 industries in consumer sentiment, and the industry's negative score this year had rarely been matched during the 19 years of the poll.

Aside from the issue of pricing, Frazier said that there's heightened competition across the pharma industry, which presents other challenges for drugmakers.

The issue remains a priority for voters, and despite the ongoing impeachment inquiry, U.S. House speaker Nancy Pelosi said she would be willing to work with the administration on drug pricing. The administration is not hopeful that the House will be able to work on a bipartisan resolution.

Generic Drugs Get Boost from China

(Source: An article by Chi Jingyi for the Global Times)

China has announced the first 33 generic drugs that will be part of a drive to ensure the supplies and stabilize the prices of pharmaceutical products that are subject to shortages because of insufficient competition or because the producers have made such a declaration. The move is designed to reduce the cost of medical treatment and allow medical insurance to offer wider coverage to patients.

All 33 products have patents that have expired or are about to expire in China, and for which producers have not applied for registration in the intellectual property office. Included in the list are drugs to treat cancer, Parkinson's, high cholesterol, pediatric conditions/ailments and other rare diseases.

China will take steps to establish and improve inventories, according to a statement from the State Council, China's cabinet, posted on its website. The statement is in line with an earlier document issued by several agencies, including the National Health Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the National Medical Products Administration and the National Intellectual Property Administration.

"For a long time, patented drugs with very good therapeutic effects in clinical practice have often had a patent period of 10 to 15 years in China. As a result of investments in research and development (R&D), the cost of these patented drugs is often expensive, with a single tablet worth as much as tens or even hundreds of yuan," an official for the Beijing Municipal Intellectual Property Office, said anonymously.

After the generic versions of these medicines are released it is likely costs will decrease significantly due to the fact that they will be 20-40 percent cheaper than branded versions. It is estimated that a shift from branded to generic could result in a cost savings of tens of billions of yuan every year for the national healthcare system.

China vowed to promote R&D of generic drugs to solve the problem of shortages of high-quality generic drugs and to secure drug supplies, according to the State Council. China will make a list of medicines that are encouraged to be produced as generic drugs, which will be included in the national science and technology plan, and priority will be given to the review and approval of their registration applications.

In Brief (cont.)...

to translation, Third Aurora is using smartphone augmented reality to delivery a suite of other information and services directly from the package label, including purchasing.

- ◆ With the discontinuation of the chemo drug *vincristine* by **Teva Pharmaceuticals** (used in the treatment of serious pediatric cancers) **Pfizer** has stepped up to fill the serious shortfall by expediting additional shipments. The drug, which is critical in treatments and clinical trials, is now a priority for Pfizer, and the company is strongly committed to making sure it is available to patients in need.

- ◆ Aiming to reduce debt after its US\$59 billion Shire acquisition, **Takeda** will sell some 30 over-the-counter and prescription drugs in the Middle East and Africa to Acino International (Switzerland) for more than US\$200 million. The products are primarily out of Takeda's chosen focus areas with a few exceptions. Upon completion of the deal, approximately 300 Takeda employees will transfer to Acino.

- ◆ Pharma industry leaders are in support of the U.K. government's decision to restrict exports of key medicines as a precautionary measure that would stop companies from taking advantage of currency fluctuations to secure higher prices in overseas markets in the event of a no-deal Brexit. As of October 17th, U.K. prime minister and the head of the E.U. had come to an agreement for Brexit, but the measure would still need to pass a vote in the E.U. and the British parliament.

- ◆ Pharmaceutical manufacturer **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)** posted stronger-than-expected third quarter earnings and lifted its full-year sales and profit guidance, as pharmaceutical revenues surprised to the upside. Group revenues rose 1.7% to US\$20.7 billion. J&J's pharmaceutical business saw a rise of 5.8% to US\$10.9 billion.

Sources: Company Press Releases, Drug Channels Institute, Drug Store News, FiercePharma and Scrip