

Open House Consultation
“Accessibility to safe and quality medicines in the supply chain in India”
By
FICCI-CASCADE AND PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFE MEDICINES (PSM)

FICCI CASCADE (Committee against smuggling and counterfeiting activities destroying the economy) and PSM (Partnership for Safe Medicines) India, organized an Open House consultation on “Accessibility to safe and quality medicines in the supply chain in India” on 15th February, 2013. The consultation witnessed huge gathering from different sectors of the economy. Partnership for Safe Medicines India informed the gathering about their recent initiative due to which patients can now get their medicines tested in accredited Government approved laboratories at extremely low cost. Mr. P. D. Sheth, Vice President of the International Pharmaceutical Federation said “This will establish trust on the Quality and existing Regulatory Standards between the manufacturers and the consumers”. A draft proposed methodology was released for public comments and wide circulation amongst all the stakeholders, prior to its official launch. It was suggested that Government of India should also expedite the process of implementation of effective 'track & trace' system that has been mandated for all products that are meant for exports and domestic products which are under price control.

Ms. Meenu Chandra Head FICCI CASCADE presented the study on “Socio-economic Impact of Counterfeiting, Smuggling and Tax evasion in seven key Industry Sectors” and also pointed out the estimated annual Tax loss to government in the year 2012 as 190 crore. She further stated the estimated annual sales loss to industry at a whopping Rs. 72,969 crore. She mentioned that the estimate does not include the loss to Pharmaceutical and other FMCG as the study was not commissioned for these sectors. However a rough estimate based on limited assessment demonstrates a loss of Rs. 29,307 crore from Pharmaceutical and other FMCG sectors.

Mr. Keshav Desiraju, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare released the PSM India Report titled “Patient Safety and Drug Detection Technology, it was further revealed that India has more than 10,000 manufacturers of pharmaceutical products, but very few qualify the standards of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

With the firm belief that consumers should be empowered with more and more information and that Consumer rights organizations can play a major role in the fight against fake and counterfeit products including medicines, it was announced that FICCI-CASCADE will continue to organize state-level seminars, youth festivals and workshops with various enforcement agencies.

The key recommendations and suggestions were put forth by the esteemed dignitaries:-

- Adequate reference standards to be made available to laboratories to be updated with the new types of formulations
- Indian regulatory officials should be invited as observers in the inspections of manufacturing sites by European Union, U.S. FDA and other country regulatory agencies
- Efforts should be made to harmonize prevalent State and Central Government regulations to facilitate compliance on varied traceability and recall requirements in a uniform manner following open, global and interoperable standards
- Service providers and the patient groups must educate consumers about spurious and not-of-standard quality drugs with active support from Government of India.
- Indian industry associations, both big and small, should commit themselves to quality with appropriate self regulations, ensuring an effective cross checking process, including best practices in manufacturing, distribution and storage of medicines.
- Department of Consumer Affairs of Government of India should allocate substantial resources for creating patient safety public awareness multi-media publicity campaign under the on-going JAGO GRAHAK JAGO initiative.
- Public awareness workshops must be organized at state and regional level with all the stakeholders to seek ownership into the process.