



Awareness Raising

RAISING AWARENESS TO COMBAT FALSIFIED MEDICINES

Public awareness and education are vital to addressing the impact of falsified medicines. Effective awareness campaigns equip patients with the knowledge to help avoid this threat and safeguard their own health. Therefore, awareness is identified as one of the nine components of the work plan of the WHO mechanism.

However, many patients around the globe have not received information about the threat of falsified medicines and the resulting health risk. For example, a recent survey focusing on European consumers identified that “77% of those surveyed feel they do not receive sufficient information about falsified medicines. While a majority (66%) has heard of drug counterfeiting, respondents seem to have little information on the issue of falsified medicines: 77% say they have not been adequately informed or are ignorant on the subject”.

IFPMA seeks to inform patients and the global population about the risk posed by falsified medicines. To achieve this goal, IFPMA has developed a variety of educational materials in partnership with like-minded organizations, which are designed to build productive awareness and avoid sensational claims. In particular, IFPMA collaborated with the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) to publish a brochure on the danger of purchasing medicines online, titled “The threat of false friends.”

IFPMA and FIP are building on this effort by calling on governments, international organizations and the private sector to work, individually and collaboratively, to address the sale of falsified medicines by illegitimate online pharmacies. To achieve this partnership approach, the focus should be placed on driving behavioral change with robust awareness and education initiatives, as well as effective legislation for tough sanctions and effective enforcement.

IFPMA has joined as a founding partner of the global, multi-stakeholder Fight the Fakes campaign. Fight the Fakes raises awareness about the dangerous impacts of falsified medicines on communities and healthcare systems, giving a voice to those who have been personally affected and those working to stop this crime. The campaign seeks to build a global movement of organizations and individuals who will spotlight the complex, worldwide threat of falsified medicines and strive to reduce its negative consequences.

Fight the Fakes features a broad-based partnership of major stakeholders, including doctors, nurses, disease-specific organizations, foundations and research institutes, product-development partnerships, foundations, non-profits, wholesalers, pharmacists, mobile app services, coalitions for consumer protection and the generic and research-based pharmaceutical

The campaign gathers and develops resources on falsified medicines and shares them on its website, including videos, infographics, studies and toolkits, available in languages such as French, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili and Japanese.

This collaboration is central to raising the profile of falsified medicines, disseminating information to policy-makers, healthcare professionals, patients, the public and media, promoting the implementation of initiatives that fight falsified medicines and outlining opportunities for action.