



## PRESS RELEASE

### **International Alliance of Patients' Organizations joins Fight the Fakes as 36th partner**

**Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May, Miami** – *Fight the Fakes* is proud to announce that the [International Alliance of Patients' Organizations \(IAPO\)](#) is joining as the campaign's 36<sup>th</sup> partner. By signing up to join *Fight the Fakes*, IAPO will support awareness raising about fake medicines generally, but also throughout more than 265 member patient organizations around the world. IAPO represents patients across all disease areas and their engagement in the *Fight the Fakes* campaign will be invaluable, complementing the existing campaign partnership coalition reaching not only the general public but also thousands of nurses, pharmacists, researchers, NGOs and foundations, academic institutions and their students, pharmaceutical wholesalers, and the research-based and generics pharmaceutical industry.

By joining, IAPO will amplify *Fight the Fakes'* voice through its vast global network of patient groups in over 70 countries. "We are excited to join *Fight the Fakes* and speak up about the threats that fake medicines pose to patients all around the world. The November 2017 [WHO reports](#) on substandard and falsified medicines have shown the global prevalence of fake medicines and we are looking forward to supporting awareness raising efforts and lend our voice to *Fight the Fakes* growing global movement" said Jolanta Bilińska, Chair of the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations. "Patient exposure to falsified medication is a chronic public health issue that results in delayed care, disease progression, increased mortality and antimicrobial resistance. It also contributes to distrust of government, health care systems, and health care professionals. In short, it is a crime against patients. Every patient has the right to receive medicines that are safe, effective, and legitimate".

Jolanta Bilińska adds: "Awareness raising and global patient empowerment are at the heart of what we do. Addressing falsified medicines requires general education and knowledge of the dangers. Everyone should have the tools and sufficient education on what they can do if they suspect a medicine to be falsified and how to challenge policymakers to prioritize and act on this important issue".

Since its launch five years ago, "*Fight the Fakes* has grown to include among its partners virtually all key players involved in medicines and vaccines from the research labs to the pharmacies," explains Chris Goetz from the IFPW Foundation, currently running the *Fight the Fakes* Secretariat, "with IAPO joining, we can say we reach all the people involved from lab to bathroom cabinet."

"We are delighted to welcome IAPO into the *Fight the Fakes* campaign. Adding the patient's voice to the campaign is an excellent step to continue the momentum the campaign built over the last years and we look forward to an exciting collaboration with IAPO. Falsified and substandard medicines were widely discussed during this year's World Health Assembly, which demonstrates the increasing global awareness to fight fake medicines. With IAPO as a partner of *Fight the Fakes*, our contributions in this fight will have a far greater impact," says IFPMA Director General, Thomas Cueni.



### **About [Fight the Fakes](#)**

*Fight the Fakes* is a campaign that aims to raise awareness about the dangers of fake medicines. The campaign gives a voice to those who have been personally impacted and shares the stories of those working to put a stop to this threat to public health. It seeks to build a global movement of organizations and individuals who will shine light on the negative impact that fake medicines have on people around the globe and to reduce the negative consequences on individuals worldwide. *Fight the Fakes* campaign is the first campaign to address the issue of responsibility from the beginning to the end of the pharmaceutical supply chain, by involving and coordinating stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds.

### **About [IAPO](#)**

The International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO) is a unique global alliance of member organizations representing patients of all nations across all disease areas who work to get the patient's voice heard by everyone involved in healthcare. We nurture relationships with members, partners and all those involved in healthcare, and build dialogue with decision-makers around the world to promote patient-centred healthcare. We form clear positions on relevant healthcare policies and processes and then advocate for change with a strong patients' voice at international, regional and national level. Our vision is to see patients placed at the centre of healthcare. Our mission is to help build patient-centred healthcare worldwide.

### **About falsified medicines**

The WHO defines falsified medicines as medicines that deliberately/fraudulently misrepresent their identity, composition or source. Nearly any type of pharmaceutical product can be and has been falsified: whether "lifestyle" medicines, including erectile dysfunction and weight loss medicines, or lifesaving medicines including those used to treat malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other life-threatening conditions. Manufacturers of fake medicines do not discriminate –fake medicines can be both long established and recently marketed medicines, both branded and generic, and both domestically manufactured and imported.

### **Media contacts**

Rachel Githinji, IAPO Communications Officer: [rachel@iapo.org.uk](mailto:rachel@iapo.org.uk)