

IFPMA highlights benefits of incremental innovation for global health

- Biopharmaceutical incremental innovation increases therapeutic benefits and the number of treatment options available to healthcare providers and patients
- To better address patients' needs, researchers constantly seek to reduce dosing frequency, improve tolerability of existing medicines, and minimize the potential for drug-drug interactions

Geneva, 25 February 2013 – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) today launches a new report on [Incremental Innovation: Adapting to Patient Needs](#). The report emphasizes the importance of incremental innovation in improving medicines, explaining its scientific rationale, its medical value, and the economic incentives needed for its development. In highlighting the important role of patents in stimulating research on improved medicines, the report is also relevant to the discussions on patents and health currently taking place at the 19th session of the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP).

Incremental innovation widens treatment options available to healthcare providers and adapts medicines better to patients' needs. This process is marked by expanding the number of medicines within a therapeutic class, increasing the number of available dosing options, discovering new physiological interactions, and improving other properties of existing medicines. Such innovations often require as much research and development (R&D) and clinical trial investments as first-in-class medicines.

“Evidence-based discussions are key to advancing global health,” says IFPMA Director General Eduardo Pisani. “This publication provides facts and tangible examples to illustrate how biopharmaceutical innovation benefits patients and dispel the misperception that incremental medicines are trivial.”

There are countless examples of the significant public health impact of incremental innovation. R&D efforts based on existing medicines have led to wide-ranging therapeutic improvements, such as a new use for an antifungal medicine's metabolite to treat Chagas disease, a neglected tropical disease affecting nearly 10 million people. Improved health outcomes have also been achieved by reducing the antimalarial dosing of ASAQTM from eight to two tablets daily. A case study cited in the report highlights an improved treatment of hepatitis C, which has boosted cure rates from 38% to 54%.

“Medical innovation has brought dramatic improvements in healthcare during the last several decades, but innovation, especially when related to health, is a step-by-step process” says Eduardo Pisani. “If we are going to effectively address non-communicable diseases like cancer, heart disease and diabetes, research must continually build on these learnings.”

The IFPMA publication, [Incremental Innovation: Adapting to Patient Needs](#), can be accessed [here](#).



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news release

IFPMA represents research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 1.3 million employees research, develop, and provide medicines and vaccines that improve the lives of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

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