



PRESS RELEASE

Dealing with counterfeit medicines

18 November 2009

Release time: Immediate

The American Pharmaceutical Group (APG) and the Wellcome Trust have today published a report and briefing on counterfeit medicines in the developed and developing worlds.

A Conference on the issue was held on 26 October 2009 in London and was attended by opinion formers and experts from across the world.

The Conference concluded that the international trade in counterfeit medicines amounts to billions of dollars (estimated at US\$75bn [£45bn] for 2010). It is a highly sophisticated and well-organised criminal activity with ready access to global markets.

Counterfeit medicines were seen to represent a major threat to public health, particularly in developing countries. Progress in addressing the problems of counterfeit medicines has been slow in the past because of a lack of awareness of the extent of the problem. In addition, there has been an unfortunate conflation with the production of generic medicines and the protection of intellectual property rights.

Action is required in a number of areas from the pharmaceutical and generic medicines industries, national governments, NGOs, enforcement agencies, customs and trade organisations, national health systems and patients. The areas include:

- Better assessing the size of the problem
- Improved capacity development to identify counterfeits
- Adequate regulatory and legal frameworks
- Collaboration between agencies in each country, drawing upon INTERPOL's training programmes in East Africa
- Political will to tackle the issue
- The use of inexpensive, portable devices to support enforcement.

The full Report and related presentations can be accessed here:

www.wellcome.ac.uk/counterfeits

<http://apg.uk.com/about-workstream/counterfeit.php>

Contact

Katrina Nevin-Ridley, Head of Media Relations, The Wellcome Trust +44 (0)20 7611 8540
APG Workstream Secretariat +44 (0)20 7395 7175/7166