



Pfizer Conducts Counterfeit Medicine Training with Malaysian Authorities

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Training to help forge stronger collaboration between Pfizer and Malaysian Authorities in fight against fake medicines

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, June 9 — Pfizer Malaysia conducted a training session with senior officials from the Ministry of Health, Royal Malaysia Customs, Royal Malaysia Police and Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperation and Consumerism as part of its efforts to raise awareness on counterfeit medicines and to enhance private and public sector collaboration in the fight against this illegal trade.

Over 30 officials were in attendance at the event, where the scope of the problem, the dangers of counterfeit medicines, and investigative techniques to identify and combat counterfeit medicines were shared.

Counterfeit pharmaceuticals currently account for 10% of the world's medicines and are growing at a rate of 13% annually.ⁱ By 2010, counterfeit medicines were estimated to bring in approximately USD75 billion in revenue – a value equivalent to 10% of the legitimate industry.ⁱⁱ In Malaysia, it is estimated that roughly 3-5% of all medicines in circulation in the market is fake.ⁱⁱⁱ

“For Pfizer, counterfeit medicines are, first and foremost, a matter of patient health and safety,” said Mark Robinson, Director, Pfizer Global Security. “Counterfeit medicines are manufactured in unlicensed and unregulated sites, and frequently under unsanitary conditions. They may contain no active ingredient, the wrong active ingredient or the incorrect dosage of an active ingredient. Counterfeit medicines may also contain toxic ingredients, such as heavy metals, arsenic, boric acid, brick dust, floor wax, leaded paint, and cartridge ink.”

Patient safety is a top priority at Pfizer. Pfizer has in place rigorous quality-control systems to ensure that materials are developed and produced in accordance with all applicable Pfizer and regulatory standards.

With non-genuine medicine, patients are deprived of the therapeutic benefit of the medicine that their doctors prescribe. Because of the risk that counterfeit medicines pose, Pfizer has implemented an aggressive and focused global anti-counterfeiting campaign to detect, disrupt and deter major manufacturers and distributors of counterfeit Pfizer medicines.

“The key to the success of that program is the effective partnerships we have built with enforcement authorities around the world. As part of those partnerships, we provide training to authorities from at least 140 countries to raise awareness to the counterfeiting problem and enhance their ability to distinguish counterfeit from authentic Pfizer medicines,” said Robinson. “Today’s training with Malaysian authorities is an important step in forging stronger collaborations with the public sector towards our shared goal of fighting the fakes.”

Pfizer also explores new anti-counterfeiting technologies to make it more difficult for counterfeiters to make convincing copies of its medicines, and easier for enforcement authorities, healthcare providers and patients to distinguish counterfeit from authentic Pfizer medicines. For example, some Pfizer products include uniformly embedded anti-counterfeit technology such as the PASS (Patient Authentication via SMS System) technology, which allows patients to verify and authenticate the purchased products via their mobile phones or the Internet. Additionally, the safety measures include Malaysia Meditag by Ministry of Health Malaysia, Temper Evident security seals and Pfizer's watermark on the packaging.

“Educating consumers about the dangers of counterfeit medicines is an ongoing process and ensuring they have access to genuine medicines is important,” said Azwar Kamarudin, Director of Corporate Affairs, Health & Value of Pfizer Malaysia. “It is important that Malaysian authorities and the pharmaceutical industry continue to work together on ways to stay ahead of counterfeiters in curbing fake medicines to protect the safety of our consumers.”

About Pfizer Malaysia

Pfizer Malaysia is committed towards Working Together for a Healthier World™. At Pfizer, we apply science and our global resources to improve health and well-being at every stage of life. We strive to set the standard for quality, safety and value in the discovery, development and manufacturing of medicines for people and animals. Our diversified global health care portfolio includes human and animal biologic and small molecule medicines and vaccines, and many of the world's best-known consumer products. Every day, Pfizer colleagues work across developed and emerging markets to advance wellness, prevention, treatments and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time. Consistent with our responsibility as the world's leading Biopharmaceutical Company, we also collaborate with health care providers, governments and local communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care around the world. For more than 50 years, Pfizer has worked to make a difference for all who rely on us. To learn more about our commitments, please visit us at www.pfizer.com.my

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ⁱBaker & McKenzie.Counterfeiting in the Pharmaceutical Industry; a look at the Bitter Pill in China.
<http://www.bakermckenzie.com/RRChinaCounterfeitingPharmaceuticalBitterPill/>. Accessed 13 November 2013.

ⁱⁱWorld Health Organisation.Counterfeit medicines.[Online]. 2006 Nov 14 [cited 2008 Nov 10]; Available from:
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs275/en/print.html>. Accessed 13 November 2013.

ⁱⁱⁱ Philip Stevens & Dr. Helmy Haja Mydin in Fake medicines in Asia.
http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Helmy_Haja_Mydin/publication/235912758_Fake_medicines_in_Asia/links/02bfe51410e45883f2000000.pdf