IMA-FOMA emergency meeting discusses generic drugs

Urges government to strengthen quality control mechanisms

New Delhi, April 30, 2017: With the on-going confusion and deliberations on the prescription of generic and branded drugs in the country, an emergency meeting was conducted by the Indian Medical Association–Federation of Medical Associations of India (IMA–FOMA) at the IMA Headquarters in Delhi. The meeting was held to discuss the emergent situation on generic drugs as well as the prescription of generic name of drugs by medical professionals.

The IMA-FOMA lauded the Hon'ble Prime Minister's concern about the availability, accessibility, and affordability of quality economical drugs to the society. The body also recommended that the government should ban differential pricing of a drug under different brand names and advocated for "one chemical drug, one company, one price".

Speaking about this, Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement, said, "The medical fraternity collectively wants the government to strengthen quality control mechanisms to ensure adherence to good manufacturing practices for the safety of patients. While we are all for the move on conducting bioequivalence tests for drugs, it is also a fact that the judgment to choose a rational drug and its format vests only with the registered medical practitioners. This right of the medical profession is sacrosanct."

Amidst directions by the MCI, which state that doctors should prescribe generic drugs to patients, IMA-FOMA members felt that for a rational prescription, doctors should choose drugs (generic–generic or generic–brand based) depending upon their quality, efficacy, and economy. This prescription should also be written legibly and preferably in capital letters.

Adding further, Dr Aggarwal said, "As per a study based on clinical trials, there is no evidence that brand name drugs worked any better than generic drugs. And therefore, we suggest that differential pricing be done away with and a uniform policy be adopted."

The meeting was attended by the following associations: Indian Medical Association, All India Ophthalmological Society, Urological Society of India, Geriatric Society of India, Indian Radiology and Imaging Association, Indian Academy of Echocardiography, Heart Care Foundation of India, Cardiological Society of India, Association of Surgeons of India, Indian Psychiatric Society, Delhi Psychiatrist Society, Indian Orthopaedic Association, The Federation of Obstetric and
Gynaecological Societies of India, Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists and Leprologists, Association of Physicians of India, Indian Academy of Echocardiography, and FFPAIA.

IMA–FOMA will be meeting the President of MCI, Union Health Minister and Prime Minister of India about the views of the medical fraternity on this issue. All the constituent members of IMA–FOMA shall communicate these Delhi Resolutions to its members.

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About IMA: Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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