

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ASOP GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS HOST INDIA FORUM ON PATIENT
SAFETY AND ACCESS TO SAFE ONLINE PHARMACIES**

New Delhi, India – The [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global), Partnership for Safe Medicines (PSM) India Initiative, International Alliance of Patients' Organisations (IAPO), Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC), U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP), and leading consumer organizations worked with the Government of India (GoI) to organize and host the March 1-2, 2017 International Forum, "Patient Safety and Access to Safe Online Pharmacies."

According to [ASOP Global's Executive Director, Libby Baney](#), "As the GoI considers changes to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act to allow Indian patients to purchase prescription drugs through Internet websites, it is important to that the Government implement best practices to promote consumer awareness and to encourage cooperative activities with Internet, credit card and shipping companies so law enforcement and regulators ensure access to safe online pharmacies and take down websites selling illegal drugs."

"ASOP Global also recommends that GoI consider using .pharmacy as a way for India to accredit and distinguish safe online pharmacies from illegal actors," said ASOP Global Board Member and former senior U.S. Department of Commerce official, Jeffrey Gren. "We will continue to provide our expertise and assistance to India following the Forum."

The goals and objectives of the Forum include sharing information on global best practices on improving access to safe online pharmacies while combating illegal Internet drug sales; facilitating interactive discussions on safe online pharmacies public awareness campaigns and effective regulatory, customs and law enforcement coordination to remove spurious medicines not sold through the legitimate supply chain; coordination to develop a patient safety implementation framework by engaging with all of the players in the healthcare delivery mechanism; and developing an action plan for India to implement and to promote patient safety utilizing all existing expertise and technology to empower Indian patients to make an informed choice.

(more)

“It is good practice to engage with all the stakeholders, especially the patients, whenever policymakers contemplate to change existing laws or bring new laws in the interest of citizens,” said Shri Bejon Kumar Misra, founder of the Partnership for Safe Medicines India Initiative and a leading activist in India on patients’ rights and access to safe and quality healthcare. “It is very important to engage and collaborate with international experts and organizations to learn from and adopt relevant global best practices as we leverage technology to enhance medicine access and quality for citizens of India,” he said.

“The Government is taking significant steps to strengthen the pharmaceutical supply chain right from the manufacturer to the consumer, and evolving a technology based model to enable this,” Misra said. “We intend to deliver the best model to our citizens, providing eAccess with proper safeguards. Specifically, we are evolving a mechanism to register all pharmacies, including ePharmacies, and creation of a National Portal to act as the nodal platform for transacting and monitoring sale of drugs.”

The registered ePharmacies would come under direct purview of the regulator and would require to meet compliance requirements. “All unregistered entities would then be easy to identify and address, once the legitimate players are known to all,” said Shri K L Sharma, the Govt’s Joint Secretary for Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In addition to ASOP Global, Forum speakers include high-level Government of India officials, India industry experts and international experts from the United States, Great Britain, Nigeria, Indonesia, France, INTERPOL, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, International Alliance of Patient Organizations and the India Internet Pharmacy association.

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ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR SAFE ONLINE PHARMACIES

Headquartered in Washington, D.C. with operations in Europe and Asia, the [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global) is an international non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the threat of illegal online pharmacies and making the Internet safe for consumers worldwide through advocacy, research and education.

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