

## [ASOP Global Successfully Convenes March 1 – 2, 2017 International Forum on Patient Safety and Access to Safe Online Pharmacies in Delhi, India](#)

Alongside local India partners, ASOP Global organized and brought together key international stakeholders during a March 1 – 2, 2017 Forum titled “Patient Safety and Access to Safe Online Pharmacies.” India partners included the Gov. of India (GoI), the Partnership for Safe Medicines India Office, the India Consumer Online Foundation and India patient organizations. International partners included ASOP Global, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention (USP), and the International Alliance for Patient Organizations (IAPO). During the trip, ASOP Global was also able to meet with key U.S. and foreign regulators through side-bar meetings.

The Forum was very well received by all who joined, with approximately 160 participants including India Federal and State GoI officials, representatives of India pharmacy and pharmaceutical industry, and member companies of Digital Health Platform, an association of Indian Internet pharmacies. Key topics covered during the symposium included:

- India Initiatives on Safe Online Pharmacies;
- Findings of the India National Drug Survey 2017;
- International Safe Online Pharmacies Best Practices;
- Public Awareness for Safe Online Pharmacies;
- Third Party Private and Public Sector Cooperation;
- Application of the .pharmacy TLD in India; and
- The Way Forward and Future Opportunities for Cooperation.

Forum speakers included:

- High-level GoI officials;
- India industry representatives;
- International experts from the USFDA, USP, ASOP Global, Great Britain, Indonesia, France, the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), INTERPOL, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), the International Alliance of Patient Organizations (IAPO), the International Institution of Research Against Counterfeit Medicines, PhRMA, and the Pharmaceutical Security Institute;
- Partnership for Safe Medicines (PSM) India Office;
- Digital Health Platform (an association of Indian Internet pharmacies);
- The US Embassy; and

- WHO SEARO and WHO India Offices

Prior to the Forum Gol was considering changes to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act to permit online sale of prescription medicines following a crackdown by drug regulators against the sale of medicines through websites. Based on Gol's statements at the Forum and beyond, all anticipate that the Gol soon establish new rules that explicitly authorize online sales of prescription medicines in India. Since the Forum, on March 16, 2017, India's Ministry of Health and family Welfare has issued a public notice titled "Public Consultation Regarding Regulation of Sales of Drugs in the Country. This Notice covers online and offline sale of drugs.

Scheduled around the Forum, ASOP Global engaged with local and international partners in side-bar meetings. Key stakeholders include:

- US FDA India Office,
- India Office of Drug Controller General,
- International Alliance of Patient Organizations (IAPO),
- Partnership for Safe Medicines (PSM) India Office,
- Digital Health Platform (an association of Indian Internet pharmacies, and
- WHO SEARO and WHO India Offices

ASOP Global was well received, several follow-up India activities were identified and there was strong support expressed for continued cooperation with ASOP Global. Gol is planning to establish an e-portal for registration of manufacturers, wholesalers and online pharmacies. This portal, to be established perhaps as soon as six months, will have a drop down menu of India registered online pharmacies. Online pharmacy registrations will be required to go through the portal. Online and offline regulations and requirements for the standard of patient care would be the same. The Gol plans for an e-portal have already been framed and put in the public domain for comments from all stakeholders as an outcome from the India Forum. The document is available on the following link: <http://mohfw.nic.in/showfile.php?lid=4246>

Below are pictures of the ASOP Global India Forum:

[\[Show picture list\]](#)