

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6768  
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2012  
INCENTIVES TO DOCTORS  
Mani Shri Jose K.;Tewari Shri Manish

**Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the drug manufacturing companies induce doctors with various incentives to market their products;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether due to such incentivised schemes of these companies, doctors tend to prescribe expensive medicines to patients and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of recommendations received from the Parliamentary Committee on Health and Family Welfare against such practices of drug companies;
- (e) whether the Government would contemplate to make it mandatory for drug companies to reveal on their websites their expenditure on doctors as United States has recently done by making `Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act` and if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the Government would contemplate to set up a body to regulate the functioning of these companies or by giving additional powers to the Medical Council of India; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof alongwith the developments made by the Government during the last three years?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

(a) to (g): There were some reports in the newspapers in the recent past regarding promotional expenses being made by the Pharma Companies. The reports suggested that some unethical marketing practices are being followed by certain pharma companies. Keeping in view the seriousness of the allegations made in the media reports, this Department felt the need to take up the matter in the interest of the consumers/patients as such promotional expenses being extended to doctors had direct implications on the pricing of drugs and its affordability. After discussing the issues with the Pharma Associations/ Industry, this Department has prepared a draft `Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices` (UCPMP) which is to be adopted voluntarily in the first instance. The UCPMP was put up on the Department's website [www.pharmaceuticals.gov.in](http://www.pharmaceuticals.gov.in) for inviting the comments from all the stakeholders. The comments received were examined and draft UCPMP has been prepared and circulated to the pharma association for their comments.

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have informed that the Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health & Family Welfare in its 45th Report on the `Issues Relating to Availability of Generic, Generic-branded and Branded Medicines, their Formulation and Therapeutic Efficacy and Effectiveness` has observed that despite there being a code of ethics in the Indian Medical Council Rules forbidding doctors from accepting any gift, hospitality, trips to foreign and domestic destinations etc. from healthcare industry, there is no let-up in this practice and the pharma companies continue to sponsor foreign trips of many doctors and shower with high value gifts to obliging prescribers who then prescribe costlier drugs as quid pro quo. Ultimately all these expenses get added up to the cost of drugs.

The issue has been a cause of serious concern for the government since the practice is not limited to private practitioners but has also crept deeply into the public health care delivery system being operated by the Government, which has increased the expenditure of the Government. The practice is also responsible for promotion of irrational use of medicines in the country which has very dangerous consequences in the long run. Aggrieved with the situation, the Indian Medical Council(Professional conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002 were amended by Medical Council of India(MCI) by notification dated 10.12.2009 by inserting a new Clause 6.8 which states that a medical practitioner shall not endorse any drug or product of the industry publically. The amendment provided for a number of do's and don'ts for medical practitioners in relation to their interaction with the Pharma companies and forbidding them from receiving gifts, hospitality etc. from them. In addition, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has from time to time issued circulars/ instructions to all Government hospitals, CGHS dispensaries as well as the State Governments to promote prescription of generic medicines by their doctors to the maximum extent possible.