

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3341

ANSWERED ON:31.08.2012

INCENTIVES TO DOCTORS BY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

Tewari Shri Manish

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to certain drug companies inducing doctors with various monetary and non-monetary incentives to market their products, if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (b) whether due to such incentivised schemes of the Drug manufacturing companies, doctors tend to prescribe expensive medicines to patients even when they are not needed;
- (c) if so, the details of the recommendations received from Parliamentary Committee on Health & Family Welfare against such practices of drug companies;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to make it mandatory for drug companies to reveal on their websites as to how much they spend on Doctors to increase sale of their products as United States (US) has recently done by making "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act", if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) whether his Ministry proposes to set up a body to regulate functioning of drug manufacturing companies against such unethical practices or by giving additional powers to the Medical Council of India (MCI), and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) to (e): The Department of Pharmaceuticals under Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, which is concerned with the affairs relating to development and promotion of the drug manufacturing industry, has informed that 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, that 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, the Department of Pharmaceuticals prepared a draft Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (UCPMP) to be adopted voluntarily in the first instance. The UCPMP was put up on their website www.pharmaceuticals.gov.in for inviting the comments from all the stake holders. The comments received have been examined by that Department and the UCPMP is being finalised. The Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee, in its 58th report, has recommended that the Department of Pharmaceuticals should take decisive action in making the Uniform Code mandatory so that effective check could be put on the huge promotional costs and the resultant impact of the add-on costs on medicine prices.