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News / Story reproduced with thanks:- **Inpharmatechnologist**

India, Thailand call on WHO to focus on quality not IP

By Nick Taylor, 19-May-2010

Direct link to the News/Story:-

http://www.in-pharmatechnologist.com/Processing-QC/India-Thailand-call-on-WHO-to-focus-on-quality-not-IP?utm_source=RSS_text_news

India and Thailand have requested the WHO ends its involvement with IMPACT, which the countries believe has conflicts of interest, and begin a programme focused on quality, safety and efficacy.

Concerns have been raised that anti-counterfeiting actions, including the International Medical Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce (IMPACT), are being used to bolster intellectual property (IP) protection. India and Thailand expressed this view in a draft resolution proposed at the World Health Assembly (WHA). The document requests that the director general of the World Health Organization (WHO) takes a number of steps to ensure it is not involved with IP protection.

Specifically, India and Thailand believe the WHO should not be involved with infringement of IP rights and other measures that could undermine the availability of quality, safe, efficacious and affordable medicines.

Ending involvement with IMPACT would help achieve this, according to the document. India and Thailand believe IMPACT “*has not been approved by any governing body of WHO and that there are conflicts of interest in its composition*”.

A quality and safety focused programme which avoids conflicts of interest, is evidence-based, transparent and member-driven should be adopted to replace IMPACT, the document adds.

Furthermore, India and Thailand recommend that the director general creates measures which ensure IP enforcement does not inhibit access to medical products.

Member states

The document also addresses member states, urging them to strengthen national drug regulatory authorities by ensuring safe, efficacious, quality and affordable medicines are available to everyone.

Addressing weak regulatory capacity, unethical promotion of medicines and high prices are listed as means of achieving this goal. Member states are also urged to remove barriers to access to safe, quality medicines. To support these efforts India and Thailand recommend that the WHO helps member states improve capacity, technical knowledge, infrastructure and facilities. The WHO should also support development of new tests and techniques to ensure the quality of drugs, the document adds.

Proposals made by India and Thailand will be discussed this week at the WHA.