

15480 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Testimony, May 26, 1976,
before Subcommittee on
Monopoly, U.S. Senate Committee
on Small Business

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WHA21.41 The Twenty-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Director-General's report on pharmaceutical advertising;

Having noted resolution EB41.R24 of the Executive Board on the matter;

Considering that, if it is not objective, pharmaceutical advertising in whatever form is detrimental to the health of the public; and

Holding that the adherence to certain fundamental principles for the advertising of pharmaceutical products is essential,

URGES Member States to enforce the application of the ethical and scientific criteria for pharmaceutical advertising as annexed to this resolution.

ANNEX

ETHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC CRITERIA FOR PHARMACEUTICAL ADVERTISING

All advertising on a drug should be truthful and reliable. It must not contain incorrect statements, half-truths or unverifiable assertions about the contents, effects (therapeutic as well as toxic) or indications of the drug or pharmaceutical speciality concerned.

Advertising to the Medical and Related Professions

In describing the properties of a drug and its use, stress should be laid on rendering facts and data, whereas general statements should be avoided. Statements should be supported by adequate and acceptable scientific evidence. Ambiguity must be avoided. Promotional material should not be exaggerated or misleading.

A full description, based on current scientific knowledge, should include information on the producer and sponsor of the product advertised; full designation (using generic or non-proprietary names) of the nature and content of active ingredient(s) per dose; action and uses; dosage, form of administration, and mode of application; side-effects and adverse reactions; precautions and contra-indications; treatment in case of poisoning; and references to the scientific or professional literature.

A fair balance should be maintained in presenting information on effectiveness on the one hand and adverse reactions and contra-indications on the other.

Advertising to the Public

Advertisements to the public should not be permitted for prescription drugs, for the treatment of certain diseases and conditions which can be treated only by a doctor and of which certain countries have established lists, or in a form which brings about fear or distress, or which declares specific remedies to be infallible, or suggests that they are recommended by members of the medical profession.

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