

Compulsory licensing of patents is provided by law in most of the countries, but the law is seldom invoked. It may be used if the manufacturer of an "essential" or "necessary" drug refuses to reduce its price to what the health program considers to be a reasonable level.

With the exception of France, all countries in this group reimburse the drug vendor rather than the patient. The price paid to the vendor is usually determined on the basis of acquisition cost plus an established percentage markup, a dispensing fee, a container fee, or a combination of any of these. In The Netherlands, a capitation system is used in which the patient is required to have his prescription filled at a single pharmacy, and the pharmacist is paid a per capita fee for each patient registered with him.

In several countries, drug utilization review is provided through central or local boards or committees of physicians. In New Zealand, for example, medical representatives visit physicians to discuss drugs, local prescribing patterns and any individual prescribing habits which might seem to represent irrational prescribing. In Australia and Great Britain, these visits occur