

THE WHPA ABUJA CALL TO ACTION

1. We, national member organizations ¹ of the International Council of Nurses (ICN), the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT), the World Dental Federation (FDI) and the World Medical Association (WMA) are meeting in Abuja, Nigeria on the 22 – 23 November 2010, to address the alarming threat of falsified and counterfeit medical products in Africa. In attendance, are patient support and consumer groups ² too.
2. We **note with grave concern** that the problem of poor quality medicines, particularly falsification and counterfeiting of medical products is on the increase and that almost a half of medical products in some regions of Africa may be counterfeit.
3. We **recognize** that significant steps have been taken to fight medicines counterfeiting by some African governments and their regulatory bodies, health professional organisations and international organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO). However, there remains a need to ensure a zero tolerance to medicines counterfeiting as curbing this heinous crime is primary to any significant improvements that may be made in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Health professionals are uniquely positioned in this fight and must rise up to the challenge to increase the awareness of this problem and implement definitive strategies towards curbing it.
4. We therefore **commit** ourselves, as leaders representing nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, dentists and physicians, to accelerate our response to this problem by:
 - a. empowering patients and the consumers with the knowledge needed to avoid falsified and counterfeit medicines.
 - b. supporting our national drug regulatory authorities and relevant government agencies to aid pharmaceutical guideline enforcement and by assisting in developing national reporting systems that enable health professionals to report and to get feedback about adverse events, medicine-related problems, medication errors, misuse or medicine abuse, defects in product quality or detection of falsified and counterfeit medical products.
 - c. working with medicines manufacturers, national quality control laboratories, hospitals and universities to learn about quality products and ways of detecting counterfeits as well as provide continuing education programmes to health professionals on the detection and reporting of counterfeits.
 - d. establish inter professional collaboration so that health professionals and patient support groups can begin to tap from each other's core competencies in fighting this public health threat.
5. We strongly **urge** government in our countries to:
 - a. Adopt the WHO definition of falsified and counterfeit medical products so that access to legitimate, safe, effective and affordable generic medicines will not be hindered by inappropriate intellectual property rights enforcement.
 - b. To implement and enforce relevant legislations and regulations that will prevent, control and reduce the incidence of counterfeit medicines.
 - c. To strengthen the integrity of the medicines supply, procurement and distribution systems.

¹ Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

² Liberian United Youth for Community Safety and Development, Association of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, Women and Children Alive, and Community Health and Information Network.