

Editorial

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Dear Readers

Spurious and sub-standard medicines have raised a concern from patient groups and consumers due to media reports and lack of prompt regulatory intervention, which has created doubts and mistrust in the existing supply chain in the country.

India is one of the leading countries in the world to manufacture and supply medicines globally to enable citizens to access quality medicines at the most affordable price. However, figures stated by the WHO have shockingly highlighted that 35% of the world's spurious and sub-standard medicines are produced from manufacturers within India, accounting for about 20% of the total local pharmaceutical business. These spurious or sub-standard productions resemble their genuine counterparts so closely with the aid of sophisticated technology created by these "in" genuine manufacturers. This malpractice is so well shielded that it is challenging for even experts to identify the difference.

What is even more disturbing is that the nation's middle and lower classes find themselves as the major consumers of the spurious medications without their knowledge. Hospitals, dispensaries, and defense organisations coming under the umbrella of the government are the most common dumping grounds for large amounts spurious and sub-standard medications. This is mainly due to lack of vigilance and absence of qualified manpower.

It is an alarming observation that unqualified individuals rather than qualified and skilled professionals manage most of the pharmacies that come under the umbrella of the government. Pharmacists are trained professionals with skills and expertise in checking and preventing the supply and stocking of spurious and sub-standard pharmaceuticals. Further, the employment of a qualified and skilled pharmacist in the government sector will also boost the career opportunities for the budding pharmacists in the country.

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