

Access and Control Newsletter

The Access and Control Newsletter is sent by the World Health Organization, Department of Essential Medicines and Pharmaceutical Policies, Medicine Access and Rational Use Unit.

The Newsletter provides you with the latest news from WHO on access to medicines controlled under the international drug treaties, both with regards to evaluation of substances for their dependence producing properties, and to improving access for medical use to medicines made from these substances

No 5

October
2009



Contents

- Guidance for the WHO review of psychoactive substances
- Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee
- 3rd Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Pharmaceutical Palliative Care and Sciences

Guidance for the WHO review of psychoactive substances

At its 125th session in May 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board discussed briefly the Guidance for the *WHO review of psychoactive substances for international control: proposed revision* and decided to hold an internet consultation among its Member States in order to prepare for a further discussion of the Guidelines at its 126th session in January 2010. Currently, the [Report on the Internet Consultation](#) is available on the web, as well as an [updated version \(with changes tracked\) of the proposal](#).

Member States will receive a circular letter.

Eastern Mediterranean Regional Committee

At the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in Fez, Morocco, 5-8 October 2009, a side meeting was held on the topic of *Medicines for Pain Management and Other Purposes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region*.

The Access to Controlled Medications Programme was presented, as well as the results when improving access in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan and Iran.

The following recommendations were extracted from what the speakers said in their presentations and during discussion:

- All countries should adopt balanced drug control policies and legislations that aim at an optimal public health outcome by minimizing drug abuse and dependence, and making medicines under drug control readily available for rational medical use.
- All countries, the World Health Organization and the International Narcotics Control Board should work

on improving access to controlled medicines in a coordinated and collaborative response at the international level.

- Individual countries should work on improvement of access to controlled medicines, e.g. by analysing the barriers in their country, updating their National Medicines List and the National Medicines Policy Plan if necessary. In order to arrive at a good availability of controlled medicines, they should work with the WHO Access to Controlled Medications Programme.
- All countries as well as the international community should recognize that access to adequate pain management and palliative care is a human right.
- Education and training for health care workers should be made available in all countries in the Region and attention should be given to information of the general public on the facts concerning pain treatment.

The report on the side event will be annexed to the Committee Report.

3rd Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Pharmaceutical Palliative Care and Sciences

On 17 October, Dr Willem Scholten, Team Leader, Access to Controlled Medicines, was a special lecturer at a session entitled Promoting a Balanced Approach to Opioid Analgesic Availability at the 3rd Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society for Pharmaceutical Palliative Care and Sciences (JPPS) in Yokohama, Japan from 17 to 18 October 2009. JPPS was established in 2007 and currently, it has a membership of over 2700. During the conference, Dr Scholten met with Professor Fumikazu Takeda, who was a member of the expert group that developed the WHO Guidelines *Cancer Pain Relief*, in which the concept of the *Three Step Ladder of Pain Treatment* was introduced in 1986. This caused a revolution in pain treatment. Currently, the guidelines are under revision and WHO will incorporate them into broader guidelines that focus on the treatment of all types of pain. Dr Takeda also introduced the concept of palliative care in Japan in 1989. Furthermore, Dr Scholten met with the JPPS' Board.

On 19 October 2009, Dr Scholten visited the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in Tokyo and lectured pharmacy students at Hoshi University, Tokyo.

See also our [controlled medicines website](#)

Subscribe or unsubscribe to the Controlled Substances Newsletter by sending an

email to AccessAndControl@who.int

Click [here](#) for previous issues of this Newsletter

For further information:

Willem Scholten, PharmD MPA

Team Leader, Access to Controlled Medicines and

Secretary of the Expert Advisory Panel on Drug Dependence (Dependence Liability Evaluation)

World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 79 15540,

e-mail : scholtenw@who.int