



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



45th DIRECTING COUNCIL
56th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 27 September-1 October 2004

RESOLUTION

CD45.R7

ACCESS TO MEDICINES

THE 45th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having considered the report of the Director on Access to Medicines (Document CD45/10);

Bearing in mind that access to medicines and other critical public health supplies is a global priority, mandated through the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Taking into account the insufficient and inequitable access to essential medicines and other public health supplies that exist in countries of the Americas, not only for products required in the treatment of HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria, but also products used in the prevention and treatment of noncommunicable diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer, renal insufficiency, and other diseases of public health significance;

Considering the challenges that Member States face in addressing the problem, in particular, in the selection of quality products, financing, procurement, cost containment, intellectual property regulation, and supply management; and

Acknowledging the achievements of countries in the Americas in developing medicines policy based on principles of safety, quality, and efficacy, and in collaborating to develop regulatory capacity in the Region through fora, such as the Pan American Network for Drug Regulatory Harmonization,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge Member States to:
 - (a) assign priority to the issue of access to essential medicines and other public health supplies, addressing the determinants of access at the national level with special focus on poor and marginalized populations;
 - (b) develop generic drug policies as a means to increase the availability and affordability of essential medicines, ensuring product quality and safety through effective regulation and promoting rational use through incentives aimed at both providers and users;
 - (c) promote policies for the prescription of drugs by generic name, with the object of reducing the impact of health expenditure, especially on the poorest populations, introducing competitive pricing in the markets, promoting rational use, and thus, improving access, while guaranteeing the safety and efficacy of drugs;
 - (d) continue to implement a broad range of cost containment strategies for essential public health supplies to maximize efficiency and resource utilization, and to monitor and evaluate the impact of such strategies on price and access;
 - (e) implement in the Region of the Americas Resolution WHA57.14 of the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly, specifically to adapt national legislation in order to maximize the flexibilities contained in the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and to encourage that bilateral trade agreements take into account the Doha Ministerial Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health;
 - (f) acknowledge the importance of supply management in ensuring continuity in access to medicines and essential public health supplies, and to strengthen accordingly pharmaceutical supply management systems.
2. To urge the Director to:
 - (a) support the development of networks and partnerships with the active participation of key stakeholders to implement a program of work promoting the development of generic medicine policies in the Region, the development and monitoring of cost containment strategies in accordance with applicable international laws and agreements and the strengthening of supply management capacity;

- (b) continue to strengthen the Regional Revolving Fund for Strategic Public Health Supplies as a procurement mechanism in support of the technical program of work in promoting access to essential medicines in the Region;
- (c) emphasize promotion of the rational use of drugs through appropriate prescription, distribution, and use;
- (d) attempt to identify mechanisms for promoting research and development in the field of drugs for neglected diseases;
- (e) assist the Member States in the implementation of Resolutions WHA56.27, Intellectual property rights, innovation and public health, and WHA57.14, Scaling up treatment and care within a coordinated and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS;
- (f) continue encouraging efforts to implement the Pharmaceutical Clearinghouse of the Americas to facilitate actions aimed at promoting access to drugs in the Member States.

(Ninth meeting, 1 October 2004)