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WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION STATEMENT

ON THE

WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

PHYSICIANS AND PHARMACISTS

IN MEDICINAL THERAPY

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Tel Aviv, Israel, October 1999
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A. INTRODUCTION

1. The goal of medicinal therapy is to improve patients' health and quality of life. Optimal medicinal therapy should be safe, effective, judiciously chosen and cost-effective. There should be equity of access to medicinal care and an accurate and up-to-date information base meeting the needs of patients and providers.
2. Physicians and pharmacists have complementary and supportive responsibilities in achieving the goal of providing optimal medicinal therapy. This requires communication, respect, trust and mutual recognition of each other's professional competence. When counseling patients, the physician may focus on the goal of therapy, the risks and benefits and side effects. The pharmacist on the other hand may focus on correct usage, treatment adherence, dosage, precautions and storage information.

B. THE PHYSICIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

(Only in relation to medicinal therapy, without reference to the physician's full range of responsibilities)

3. Diagnosing diseases on the basis of the physician's education and specialized skills and in accepting the sole responsibility for the diagnosis.

4. Assessing the need for medicinal therapy and prescribing the relevant medicines (in consultation with patients, pharmacists and other health care professionals, when appropriate).
5. Providing information to patients about diagnosis, indications and treatment goals, as well as action, benefits, risks and potential side effects of medicinal therapy.
6. Monitoring and assessing response to medicinal therapy, progress toward therapeutic goals, and when necessary, revising the therapeutic plan (where appropriate in collaboration with pharmacists and other caregivers).
7. Providing and sharing information in relation to medicinal therapy with other health care providers.
8. Maintaining adequate records for each patient according to the need for therapy and in compliance with legislation (medical law).
9. Maintaining a high level of knowledge about medicinal therapy through continuing professional development.
10. Ensuring safe procurement and storage of medicines that the physician is required to supply.
11. Reviewing prescription orders to identify interactions, allergic reactions, contra-indications and therapeutic duplications.
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12. Reporting adverse reactions to medicines to health authorities, when appropriate.

C. THE PHARMACIST'S RESPONSIBILITIES

(Only in relation to medicinal therapy, without reference to the pharmacist's full range of responsibilities)

13. Ensuring safe procurement, adequate storage and dispensing of medicines (in keeping with the relevant regulations).
14. Providing information to patients, which may include the name of the medicine, its purpose, potential interactions and side effects as well as correct usage and storage.
15. Reviewing prescription orders to identify interactions, allergic reactions, contra-indications and therapeutic duplications. Concerns should be discussed with the prescriber (physician).
16. On request of the patient, discussing medicine-related problems or concerns with regard to the prescribed medicines.

17. Advising patients, when appropriate, on the selection and the use of non-prescription medicines and the patient's management of minor symptoms or ailments (accepting the responsibility for such advice). Where self-medication is not appropriate, advising patients to consult their physician for diagnosis and treatment.
18. Reporting adverse reactions to medicines to health authorities, when appropriate.
19. Providing and sharing general as well as specific medicine-related information and advice with the public and health care providers.
20. Maintaining a high level of knowledge about medicinal therapy through continuing professional development.

D. CONCLUSION

21. The patient will best be served when pharmacists and physicians collaborate together, recognizing each other's roles, to ensure that medicines are used safely and appropriately to achieve the best health outcome.



RESCINDED