



WESTERN PACIFIC PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM NEWSLETTER



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ANNUAL REPORT OF WESTERN PACIFIC PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM 2004-2005

The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum has completed its fourth year of operation, has undergone a period of consolidation, together with a plan looking forward to the future of pharmacy in the region. This will help consolidate our objectives as outlined below.

- Improving health in the Western Pacific Region by development and enhancement of pharmacy practice and research.
- Encouraging the implementation of pharmacy service and practice, projects by national pharmaceutical associations.
- Supporting WHO policies and integrating appropriate WHO policies into undergraduates, postgraduate and continuing professional development programs.
- Combating the production and distribution of counterfeit and substandard medicines and the sale of medicines by people who are not qualified.
- Formulating policy statements on health issues identified at meetings of the Forum.

These objectives will be achieved by encouraging member organisations to -

- Disseminate drug information to help professionals, patients and the general public.
- Participate in health promotion and health education programs including the prevention of disease and disability.
- Implement drug utilisation studies and pharmaceutical care projects.
- Contribute to all scientific and relevant aspects of pharmacy practice into the curriculum of schools of pharmacy in the Western Pacific region.

The Western Pacific Forum is the most dynamic region in the world. Its development related to the enormous changes taking place in China in capital growth affects the whole region. Changes to the practice of pharmacy have continued at great speed. Continuing developments relating to the separation of prescribing and dispensing are ongoing in Japan, China Taiwan, and the Philippines. Singapore and Malaysia are making moves towards the separation and we look forward to the time when the whole of the region has a clear cut separation between prescribing and dispensing.

The Western Pacific Region, together with its neighbouring South East Asian region, was shocked at the devastation of the tsunami in December 2004. Every pharmaceutical organisation in the region supported relief to the pharmaceutical needs of the affected communities. The Forum was able to respond via links in Australia to a special request from Sri Lanka within 24 hours of the tsunami striking that country. A subsequent Executive Committee meeting of the Forum has expressed the view that the Forums should continue to establish a network of support for future world disasters. The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum has taken this proposition to the FIP Bureau.

I have the privilege of working with an Executive Committee of all of whom have great visions for co-operation in our region, joining with me as President, I have -

Mr Nobuo Yamamoto, Vice-President, Japan
Mr Reynaldo Omal, General Secretary, Philippines
Dr LuLulu, Member, China
Dr Wei Keung Choi, Member, Singapore
Dr Mei-Ling Hsiao, Member, China Taiwan

and I thank them for the co-operation and devotion to the development of our regional body of FIP working with the World Health Organisation. We also express our appreciation to the enthusiastic support of so many of the pharmacy associations in the countries of our region.

It is also appropriate that we pay tribute and express our thanks to the various officers of the World Health Organisation in the Western Pacific Region who have given us so much encouragement and support, particularly Dr Budiono Santoso and Mr. Jun Yoshida.

During the year Executive meetings have been held in different member countries and we have continued our innovation in holding seminars on each of these occasions. These Executive meetings and seminars have, in this year, been held in Beijing, Manila and Singapore.

PROGRAMS

Training programs in communication skills

Following the introductory program supported by WHO last year in the Philippines, continuing programs are being

conducted and pharmacists updated in the Philippines, China Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand. Future promotions have been planned to undertake such programs in the Peoples Republic of China and Vietnam.

Pharmacists Against Tobacco

The Forum realizes that the programs for Pharmacists Against Tobacco rely very heavily on the communication skills program for it to be ultimately successful. Programs to support cessation of smoking are currently being undertaken by the pharmaceutical associations in Japan, China Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. A CD training program for pharmacists that would be adapted for use throughout the whole region is in its final stages of revision and readiness for translation into regional languages.

Ask Questions About Medicines

Programs are continually being conducted in China Taiwan, Philippines, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. In June 2005 a national program is being conducted by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia urging the public to ask questions of their pharmacist relating not only to medicines and medicine information through consumer medication leaflets and verbal advice and information, but also to promote the desirability of Home Medicines Reviews being conducted by pharmacists in the referral of medical practitioners.

Combating Counterfeit Medicines

Once again this is a program that requires the communication skills from the pharmacist. WHO reports that the distribution of counterfeit medicines is increasing rapidly throughout the region and is helped, to a large extent, by the lack of conformity of regulations in all the countries. Developed or developing countries are not exempted from the problem of the distribution of counterfeit medicines. Medicines bought over the internet cross country borders easily and no country is immune from this process. WHO Western Pacific has developed a RAPID ALERT SYSTEM for counterfeit medicines. The Rapid Alert System is an electronic immediate notification, communicated to all countries where particular medicines have been identified as counterfeit. This will replace the old manual distribution and therefore eliminate much of the delay that has occurred in the past. The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum has requested participation in this program. The Forum is undertaking action to combat counterfeit medicines in support of the WHO initiative by -

- > promotion to consumers on counterfeit medicine problems
- > to ask questions about your medicine program information to be published on the website following notification from WHO through the regional Rapid Alert System
- > dissemination of information to the pharmaceutical associations throughout the region
- > reviewing printing of warning leaflets in all the necessary languages for general distribution to the public
- > identifying the public's misperception of medicines compared with other counterfeit products on the market.

Good Pharmacy Practice Standards

The Forum continues to conduct seminars and promote GPP in countries aimed having an acceptable level of practice. WHO

has requested that we target our GPP activities, particularly to Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia and Vietnam.

The Forum held discussions with representatives from the Chinese Pharmaceutical Association regarding good pharmacy practice in the Peoples Republic of China and pharmaceutical care in the hope of establishing a co-operative program to develop and promote GPP in China.

The Chinese Non Prescription Medicines Association has developed GPP standards for practice in community pharmacy and the Forum would like to be able to work with these established standards to increase the range of practice standards which they already cover. The Forum believes that the CNPMA GPP standards provide a good base that needs further development, particularly in the approaches to the professional areas of pharmacy. Further development of this program is on hold at the moment.

The forum continues to provide information on GPP standards. Following discussions with WHO, we are endeavouring to develop or identify an online continuing professional development program for pharmacists via the internet. This is targeted particularly at pharmacists in isolated areas within the region.

An Australian program Prime D Pharmacy, an online education program of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia has been identified as possibly suitable and negotiations are being undertaken for the World Health Organization office in Manila to sample and review this program.

Improving Access to Essential Medicines in the Western Pacific 2005-2010

At the request of the World Health Organization Western Pacific, the Forum will support the program for Improving Access to Essential Medicines in the Western Pacific. It has been identified that the Forum can support this program in the following manner -

- > rational selection and use of medicines
- > curricula for healthcare providers
- > national medicines policies
- > pricing of drugs
- > advice on the provision of quality medicine
- > support and influence policies on generic medicines
- > encourage social health insurance to cover essential medicines
- > particular attention to counterfeit medicines and sub-standard medicines

The World Health Organization requested our support to encourage the inclusion of these items in undergraduate programs and continuing pharmacy education programs throughout the region, particularly -

- > introduction of the essential medicines concept
- > safe medicines to reduce rational drug use
- > problem based pharmacotherapy teaching in undergraduate curricula

The Forum has written to all pharmaceutical associations in the region asking that they promote these issues as raised by WHO and request support from schools of pharmacy and encourage government regarding these matters.

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

A draft strategic plan for the Forum has been discussed and developed over a six month period and is to be finalised at the June Executive meeting. It is intended this plan should be dynamic and will be distributed to all members of the Forum.

PROMOTION OF FIP STATEMENTS AND POLICIES

Once again, we draw attention to FIP Council that many policies and guidelines and statements of both WHO and FIP have been ineffective in many parts of our region through being printed in a limited number of languages. The Forum believes that it is essential that these documents be translated into the common languages used within the Western Pacific and South East Asian regions.

It is interesting to note that at the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May 2005 the World Health Organization saw fit to discuss the problem and make moves to create a much broader multilingual dissemination of the information.

WESTERN PACIFIC PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM WEBSITE

The capacity of the website has now been increased and continues to be managed by the Pharmaceutical Society of China Taiwan with an extended editorial advisory board.

The Forum is extremely grateful to the Pharmaceutical Society of China Taiwan for enabling this website to be continually updated in the interests of pharmacy practice within the region.

As President, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Dr Mei-Ling Hoang, Ho Yan Nan and the editorial board for their work and support of this project.

The Forum Executive and the editorial board continues to encourage all countries within the region to forward any news that they have to the website for inclusion, both on the website and in any news flashes.

Parts of the website are now published in Mandarin, Japanese and English and we would encourage you all to view the website on www.wppf.org and would ask you to encourage members and the editors of your pharmacy journals in your countries to bring the attention of the website to all members.

The Forum has links to all member organisations within the Western Pacific Region and has information that relates to:

- > the Pharmabridge program
- > the WHO regional anti smoking program
- > pharmacists involved in public health
- > a section for pharmaceutical scientists
- > the communications training program
- > interactive site for messages

REGIONAL MEETING OF HEALTH MINISTERS

The regional meeting of health ministers held in Shanghai, Peoples Republic of China, in September 2004 was attended by the General Secretary, Reynolds Umali, who submitted a full report on proceedings to the Executive. This report was subsequently forwarded to all organisations within the region.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES

The Forum continues to promote and encourage the dissemination of information between all countries in the

Western Pacific Region. The dissemination is conducted in the following ways -

- > country reports at Executive meetings are re-distributed to all member countries with the minutes of the Executive meeting
- > the Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum office supplies information, on request, to any of the pharmaceutical associations within the region
- > study tours of pharmacists to other countries can be facilitated within the region. A good example of this was the study tour of Japan Pharmacists Association to Australia in December 2004 to view pharmacy practice and to visit the Therapeutic Goods Administration of the Australian government in relation to scheduling and approval of medicines. The Forum is also in the process of facilitating a visit of the Chinese Pharmaceutical Association to attend the pharmaceutical care centre in Denmark and to view the pharmaceutical care promoters via the medication reviews in patients' homes and in aged care facilities in Australia.

CENTENARY OF PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF SINGAPORE AND THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE

The Forum held its last Executive meeting in June immediately prior to the congress of the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore celebrating its 100th year.

The Forum made a presentation of an antique apothecary jar to the President of the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore, Dr Camilla Wong, to mark the special nature of the occasion.

Presentations to the congress on the development of practice in the Western Pacific Region were also made by Australia, Japan and China Taiwan.

The Forum was also delighted to have as guests at the Executive meeting, Past President of FIP, Dr Peter Kjelgaard, the President of the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society, Ho John Chang and the Chief Executive Officer of the Korean Pharmacists Association and President of FIPA, Dr Soo Jo Nam and the Presidents of the Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore, Dr Camilla Wong.

FIP SUPPORT

The Forum appreciates greatly the support of the General Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Ton Hoak and Immediate Past President, Peter Kjelgaard and the staff of the office in The Hague for their continued and invaluable support in the development of the Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum.

THE FUTURE

The Forum looks forward to providing its principal role in the region by working closely with WHO and bringing the pharmaceutical associations of the Western Pacific Region, through the Forum, much closer to FIP and FIP much closer to its member associations.

John Ware, OAM
President