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International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care Inc.

Meeting:

Seventy-second World Health Assembly (A72/1)

Agenda Item:

12.2 Member State mechanism on substandard and falsified medical products

Statement:

Statement on the trade in falsified medicines

The trade in falsified medicine flourishes in the shadow of unmet health needs. All over the world people are seeking help to cure infectious diseases or to ease acute untreated pain. In the absence of bona fide health services they turn to informal providers who are poorly qualified and insufficiently motivated to properly assess the quality of the medicines they supply. While we strongly support the strengthening of measures to address the production and trade in falsified and substandard medicines and call on all member states to sign up to the Medicrime Convention, we also contend that looking for scapegoats does not bring us further. It ends up by turning public health into an arm of law enforcement and runs the risk of criminalizing the very people our health care has failed to serve. Solutions exist in structural change. Extending health coverage and integrating palliative care into primary care provision, can therefore improve human welfare immensely and at the same time cut off the illicit trade at source: the demand of the suffering patient.

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