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Member State mechanism on substandard and falsified medical products

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Council of Nurses (ICN).

ICN is committed to action to address the ongoing problem of substandard and falsified (SF) medical products. Today we release our Position Statement on this issue guiding National Nurses' Associations and nurse clinicians, educators, researchers and policy influencers on how to reduce the risks posed by SF products.

SF products pose significant threats to health, increased disease prevalence and antimicrobial resistance. They cause loss of public confidence in healthcare professionals and health systems, impeding access to healthcare and ultimately achieving universal health coverage. ICN encourages governments to enact legislation that criminalize falsification and respond with adequate penalties and strict enforcement.

Working in all settings, nurses prescribe, administer and monitor patient treatment and are therefore well-positioned to detect SF medical products which are often only detected when they do not have the intended therapeutic effect. As such, nurses must be involved in developing national action plans to prevent, detect and respond to SF medical products and are essential in implementing the related policies.

SF medical products are a symptom of a larger problem and one that is of utmost importance to ICN and the nursing profession: a lack of access to quality, affordable healthcare. Much of the morbidity and mortality from SF medical products could be avoided if people were assured the availability of affordable, quality authentic medical products.

Increased public awareness is vital to addressing this issue. ICN is a partner of the Fight the Fakes campaign which aims to create a global movement to raise the profile of SF medical products. ICN encourages the Member State Mechanism to engage with this campaign, and to foster collaborative action with important stakeholders in the fight against SF medical products.

Thank you.

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