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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Fight the Fakes welcomes three new partners to speak out against the global health threat posed by substandard and falsified medicines**

**6 April 2020, Geneva/ Switzerland** – [Fight the Fakes](#) (FTF) is delighted to announce that three new partners will join the campaign’s awareness raising efforts against the dangers of substandard and falsified medicines: King’s College London, the Medical University of Warsaw and the Polish association ‘Stop Illegal Pharmaceuticals’.

With the world currently grappling to treat and contain the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and emerging reports of falsified COVID-19 treatments, vaccines or even cures, the new partners are joining at a time in which every voice against fake medicine counts more than ever.

Originally set up in 2013 by 10 organizations, FTF now counts 40 partner organizations, representing health care professionals, patients, civil society, manufacturers, wholesalers and industry. The three new partners bring great additional expertise to FTF’s existing membership and are committed to achieving greater recognition of the threat falsified and substandard medicines pose to patient safety and the goal of attaining universal health coverage (UHC).

Fight the Fakes is particularly delighted to strengthen its youth membership base by welcoming two new academic chapters to the campaign. Oksana Pyzik, founder of the FTF chapter at University College London (UCL) – once the first and only academic campaign member– says: “Having King’s College London and the Medical University of Warsaw joining FTF shows the increasing awareness among academics and students of the prevalence and dangers of counterfeit medicines to global public health. Harnessing the power of young people’s enthusiasm and engagement will be incredibly valuable for the FTF’s awareness raising efforts.”

The King’s College London Fight the Fakes chapter will represent a multidisciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate student-led campaign with a focus on falsified antimalarials and antibiotics, two of the most reported counterfeit drugs. “I believe the role of young people and both undergraduate and postgraduate students in achieving global health progress is still very much undervalued. Our students are incredibly keen to educate their peers as well as the general public about the issue of counterfeit medicines. Through our various global partner universities, we are hoping to spread the word as far as possible”, emphasizes Dr Bahijja Raimi-Abraham, Lecturer in Pharmaceutics at King’s College London and founder of the FTF chapter at the university.

At the Medical University of Warsaw, a dedicated student-led research group “Pharmacy & Law – Fight the Fakes” is being set up within the Department of Forensic Pharmacy. The group aims to educate students, medical staff and the public about the issue of substandard and falsified medicines while working closely with ‘Stop Illegal Pharmaceuticals’, a Polish association composed of pharmacists, doctors, students, former police officers and lawyers.

“Like many other countries which share long borders with others, there are risks of falsified medicines infiltrating the supply chain, threatening patient safety and undermining health systems. It is therefore crucial that all relevant actors – healthcare professionals, police officers, custom staff, policy makers and the



public – work together to tackle this under-recognized public health threat. Joining Fight the Fakes provides us with a great opportunity to engage with a wider network of like-minded organizations and individuals to speak out against counterfeit medicines“, underscores Prof Zbigniew Fijałek, Head of the Department of Forensic Pharmacy, Medical University of Warsaw, and President of ‘Stop Illegal Pharmaceuticals’.

Since its launch, FTF has been growing, not only in terms of partners, but also as a recognized global voice aiming to anchor the vital role of tackling substandard and falsified medicines within overall approaches to achieve UHC. The campaign is relaunching a call for members that are committed to combatting the production and spread of falsified and substandard medicines, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia where people are most vulnerable to unknowingly purchasing and consuming counterfeit medical products.

### **About Fight the Fakes**

[Fight the Fakes](#) (FTF) is a campaign that aims to raise awareness about the dangers of fake medicines. The campaign gives a voice to those who have been personally impacted and shares the stories of those working to put a stop to this threat to public health. It seeks to build a global movement of organizations and individuals who will shine light on the negative impact that fake medicines have on people around the globe and to reduce the negative consequences on individuals worldwide.

### **About King’s College London**

[King’s College London](#) is one of the top 10 UK universities in the world (QS World University Rankings, 2018/19) and among the oldest in England. King’s has more than 31,000 students (including more than 12,800 postgraduates) from some 150 countries worldwide, and some 8,500 staff. King’s has an outstanding reputation for world-class teaching and cutting-edge research. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF), eighty-four per cent of research at King’s was deemed ‘world-leading’ or ‘internationally excellent’ (3\* and 4\*). Since our foundation, King’s students and staff have dedicated themselves in the service of society. King’s will continue to focus on world-leading education, research and service, and will have an increasingly proactive role to play in a more interconnected, complex world. Visit our website to find out more about Vision 2029, King’s strategic vision for the next 12 years to 2029, which will be the 200th anniversary of the founding of the university. [World-changing ideas. Life-changing impact.](#)

### **About the Medical University of Warsaw**

The [Medical University of Warsaw](#) is one of the oldest medical schools in Poland. For over 200 years it has provided education and training in medicine and pharmacy at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The dedicated student research group “Pharmacy & Law – Fight the Fakes”, set up within the Department of Forensic Pharmacy, aims to educate students, medical staff, and the public about the issue of substandard and falsified medicines.

### **About Stop Illegal Pharmaceuticals**

[Stop Illegal Pharmaceuticals - Association for Health Protection and Rule of Law](#) was founded in 2017 by academics from the leading Medical Universities in Warsaw, Krakow and Poznan, retired law enforcement officers and lawyers. The aim of the Association is activity that reveal and prevent manifestations of pathologies and unethical practices in the trade of pharmaceutical products for human and animal use. Furthermore, the Society focuses on supporting pharmaceutical, medical, biological and legal sciences in the fight against pharmaceutical crime in its broad sense.

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