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CODE FOR MEDICAL DEVICES WELCOMED

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

Healthy systems:The medical devices industry requires a standard operating procedure with transparency.AFP

The Department of Pharmaceutical (DoP) had recently published the draft Uniform Code for Medical Device Marketing Practices (UCMDMP) which, it said, was aimed at bringing in a voluntary code to regulate fair marketing practices by the medical device industry. It also aims at giving this industry an identity apart from the marketing dynamics of the pharmaceutical industry. As per the order issued by DoP, stakeholder comments have been sought till earlier this week.

Speaking about the move, Pavan Choudary, chairman and director-general, Medical Technology Association of India, said that the present government has been widening the circle of probity.

“The announcement that the government is following through the implementation of the UCMDMP voluntarily (which is the right way to go about it) is heartening for every company which follows a high level of ethical standards,” he said.

He added that the industry is hopeful that this will translate into more credible healthcare delivery as well as restrain the fly by night operators who pose a great risk for patients and the reputation of the medical device industry.

“In times to come, we hope it will separate the chaff from the grain and give the ethical players the public esteem they deserve. Its impact will hopefully also spill over and check those operators who have found a way to circumvent the price control affected on scheduled medical devices in this government’s regime,” he explained.

Stating that it is essential to bring in a code of conduct for the medical device industry, separate from Pharma Code – Uniform Code for Pharmaceuticals Marketing Practices (UCPMP), Arnab Basumallik, director, Edwards Lifesciences India Private Limited, said that in med-tech, the categorisation of a healthcare professional is broadened to include operation theatre and intensive care unit technicians and nurses, along with the clinicians — all of whom play important roles within the healthcare ecosystem.

“Moreover, the med-tech industry continuously evolves through incremental and breakthrough innovations that address the unmet needs of patients. Therefore the *modus operandi* for imparting training and hands-on experiences to the clinicians and other stakeholders on technologies is a unique requirement and at the same time a regulatory necessity to ensure patient safety,” said Mr. Basumallik.

He added that a well-defined standard operating procedure that indicates the dos and dont’s with a fair amount of transparency is essential.

“Medical devices are characteristically different from pharmaceuticals and therefore a separate code for medical devices was much needed to accurately capture the ethical marketing practice requirements for the medical device sector,” said Sanjay Bhutani, MD, Bausch and Lomb, India. He added that the implementation of UCMDMP will be a big step towards furthering patient interest and “will restrain the unethical element and restore competitiveness and esteem for the compliant players.”

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