Interacting With The Pharmaceutical Industry

Pharmacovigilance Training Course, Lusaka, Zambia
28th March 2003
The Pharmaceutical Industry

- Multinationals
- Local Producers
- Multi-source Generic Importers
- Commercial Herbal Medicine Producers/Sellers
Why Interact With Them?

- We need them
  - Products
  - Product Information
  - They are part of the health delivery system
  - Safety Monitoring of Products?

- They need us
  - Prescribing and Dispensing of Products
  - Patient Care
  - Safety Monitoring of Products
# SWOT Analysis In Dealing With The Pharmaceutical Industry

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STRENGTHS

- Formal healthcare system - structure and functions including who can prescribe/dispense what and where
- Government
  - Policy
  - Selection (STGs, EDL, Formularies)
  - Use - patients, type and level of facilities
  - Regulation - registration, PMS etc
WEAKNESSES

- Access
  - geographical, physical, financial and professional
  - Creates gaps which others try to fill (mainly with a profit motive in mind)
- Ministry of Health - bureaucracy, inefficiencies etc.
- Lack of flexibility - what we do and how we do it is often determined by others
OPPORTUNITIES

- To engage industry in safety monitoring e.g. PSURs, IMMP?
- Source of drug information
- Education of health professionals and the public - funded by industry, controlled by MOH
THREATS

- Safety and the private sector
  - promotional practices - rumours, false reporting, advertising, packaging, drug launches, [e.g. 67% of popn in a certain country get their health information from radio!]
  - how does that impact on safety?

- Shortage of Coartem
  - Due to poor procurement planning/stock control
  - Shrinkage to family/friends and to the commercial sector
THREATS

- Availability of “branded generic” versions of Coartem
  - to fill a perceived need
  - to “piggy back” on all the hard work of the MOH in increasing confidence of the public by proper introduction and monitoring of the product

- Availability of fake or substandard Coartem

- All these may have a negative impact on the product and our programme
THREATS

- Pressure to register similar medicines
  - similar artemisinin-based antimalarials

- Proliferation of ACT and their effect on rational use
  - different dosage forms
  - different ways of taking each medicine
  - different frequency/length of administration
Knowledge of the key players in the “pharmaceutical industry” is critical.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the formal health system must be identified for appropriate action.

Pharmacovigilance can play a key role in dealing with the pharmaceutical industry.