



ACCESS TO MEDICINES IRELAND (AMI)

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THE HUMAN STORY



THE BROKEN SYSTEM

- ▶ Fair and equitable access to effective medicines is critical to public health globally
- ▶ The current incentive of market exclusivity through patents is exploitative, expensive and inequitable.
- ▶ It results in innovation that is directed at financial reward , not human need.
- ▶ It is coupled with poor transparency in the costs of drug development and commercialisation.
- ▶ It fails to give public return on public investment in early stage drug discovery
- ▶ It results in market failure in some instances

ANTIBIOTICS-A CASE IN POINT

- ▶ Antibiotics made a major contribution of about 80% to the reduction in mortality from infection following the discovery of penicillin. This is now under threat due to rising rates of antibiotic resistance
- ▶ Antibiotic development has lagged behind compounding the resistance issue because alternative drug development is better at generating continuous revenue growth to drive up shareholder value.
- ▶ “we believe the current entrepreneurial development model for antibiotics is broken and needs to be fundamentally transformed”¹
- ▶ Human need is compromised by shareholder value

THE IMPACT

- ▶ Rationing or complete inaccessibility of some medicines, especially new medicines for serious illnesses like cancer
- ▶ Desperate and sick patients and their families forced to conduct public campaigns to attempt to live or prevent disability
- ▶ Patients forced to crowd fund for treatment
- ▶ Increased disparity between rich and poor in access to medicines both within and between countries
- ▶ Patients bear the ultimate burden of a dysfunctional innovation system for drug research and development
- ▶ The current model is unsustainable in an era of rapid development of currently very expensive medicines

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE

- ▶ Governments have tools at their disposal to shift the power balance in their favour when negotiating with the pharmaceutical industry and these are needed to underpin the human right to health
- ▶ Transparency in negotiations, and collective bargaining, must be employed to ensure a better deal when purchasing medicines
- ▶ The public contributes substantially through taxation to drug development research and governments need to ensure that there is public health gain in return
- ▶ It is worth noting that some of the greatest innovations of the last century such as penicillin, insulin, and the polio vaccine were developed without a patent based incentive that only emerged in the 1960s and became the norm following WTO trade agreement in 1995.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRESPECTIVE

- ▶ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Art 12
Ireland has committed to ensuring medical treatment including access to medicines in the event of illness is a human right
- ▶ This means that governments are committed to the idea of progressive realisation of these rights.
- ▶ Currently the State's efforts on access to medicines fail to adequately take account of our human rights

ACCESS TO MEDICINES IRELAND

- ▶ www.accesstomedicines.ie
- ▶ We need your support

REFERENCES

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- ▶ Mazzucato, M. High cost of new drugs, BMJ,2016, 354:i4136