11th World Congress on
BIOSIMILARS AND BIOLOGICS
May 20-21, 2019 | Miami, USA

Patient, physician and pharmacist perspectives: A wider world view

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Patients need to make informed judgements on the value of biologic and biosimilar medicines as well as actively engage in discussion and decision-taking with other stakeholders involved with their healthcare – most particularly with physicians and pharmacists. Patients must have access to clear and impartial information about what biologic and biosimilar medicines are and what the growing availability of these medicines will mean for them. Patients must be assured of the regulatory systems in place to ensure safety, quality and efficacy and need to actively participate in post-approval monitoring and risk management, including pharmacovigilance. Around the world many governments, regulators, healthcare systems and practitioners are finding themselves challenged by the emergence of biosimilars – indeed in many countries it is the patient organisations that are on the front foot when it comes to getting biosimilars on the agenda. The Alliance for Safe Biologic Medicines has conducted seven (7) major surveys involving more than twenty (20) countries focussed on the views and attitudes of physicians and pharmacists. Several interestingly consistent responses have been received from the various survey samples. Resultant observations include: USA physicians support labels with data to learn about and evaluate biosimilars; European doctors have insufficient knowledge of biosimilars; Canadian physicians feel strongly about the need to retain sole prescription authority; and USA hospital pharmacists are more likely to be "Very familiar…" with biosimilars than retail pharmacists. For over a decade, the International Alliance of Patients' Organisations has been working with peak patient groups and regulators around the world to address the substantial knowledge gap. Patient groups believe patients have the right to expect that the life of the patient remains the primary guiding principle of biosimilar policy discussion above potential cost savings. This presentation will canvas these issues and will focus on the most recent ASBM being a survey of physicians in Australia published in 2016 and revealing a mismatch between government policy and physician practice.

Biography

Stephen Murby is a member of the International Advisory Board of the Alliance for Safe Biologic Medicines (ASBM), headquartered in Virginia, USA; a Special Board Representative of the Consumer Health Forum of Australia (CHF); and a biosimilars spokesperson for the International Alliance of Patients' Organizations (IAPO), headquartered in London. He has a special interest in biosimilars from the patient perspective and has been working with ASBM, CHF, IAPO and others over the past seven years in developing and disseminating biosimilars information and educational resources to patient, prescriber and dispenser organisations around the world. In 2017, he travelled to Australia on behalf of ASBM to facilitate several top-level meetings with peak professional organisations and government bodies on the outcomes of the ASBM Australian Prescribers Survey. Stephen has also spoken at peak body meetings on biosimilars in The Philippines, Hong Kong, Switzerland, USA and the United Kingdom

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