

Fault In National Health Insurance Scheme

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June 16, 2010 - [PRLog](#) -- The Association of Community Pharmacists of Nigeria (ACPN) has de-scribed as monumental fraud, the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and requested that its participants and Nigerians at large should demand their right to qualitative healthcare.

According to the association, the scheme is with good intentions, but the implementation has been faulty and fraudulent.

The National Chairman, Mrs Ejiro Foyibo, reiterated that the NHIS was meant to address the problems of healthcare funding in Nigeria, thereby making healthcare accessible, qualitative and affordable to Nigerians.

"Today, the reverse is the case. I boldly say that NHIS is a fraud. The pharmacists, physiotherapists, laboratory technicians have all been sidelined in the operations of the scheme.

"A situation where consultations, prescription, laboratory investigations, physiotherapy and dispensing of drugs are carried out by the same person is not in the best interest of the patient. It is unethical and exploitative. Nigerians, who are enrollees of the NHIS, should rise and ask questions on the functionality of the NHIS. We as pharmacists say no to global capitation," she stated.

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Foyibo said Nigerians do not know how to demand their rights, "Hence operators of NHIS cheat them by prescribing cheap drugs for them. Most of the enrollees come to us professionals and obtain good quality drugs.

"More worrisome is the inability of most Nigerians to interpret what they read (prescriptions). Nigerians need to be more enlightened in order to enjoy good pharmaceutical care. It is sad that some private hospitals have what they term pharmacy. But most do not meet the standard. For instance, Lagos State is hosting over 100, 000 unregistered pharmaceutical premises.

"Meanwhile, there are only 2, 000 pharmaceutical premises registered in the state by the Pharmaceutical Council of Nigeria (PCN), and that is representative of what obtains in other states of the Federation. This is responsible for the many ill health and diseases affecting Nigerians. The Pharmacists Council of Nigeria (PCN) should close down these illegal premises so as to save Nigeria from the dangers inherent there of." Describing how to differentiate a legal premise from illegal, Foyibo said a registered pharmacy will have the pharmaceutical emblem of Green Cross.

"The Pharmacy Emblem, the Green Cross or the Rx sign, is a property of PSN which is registered by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) and it is centrally distributed from the ACPN National Secretariat in Lagos.

"It is issued only to pharmaceutical premises that are duly registered by the Pharmaceutical Council of Nigeria (PCN). It is a sign of genuine and quality drugs/medicines, professionalism/pharmaceutical care services, health education and drug information, counselling and proper use of drugs. Therefore, Nigerians should be on the lookout for the emblem before entering any pharmaceutical outlet in their community."

She said the illegal and unregistered pharmaceutical premises without the emblem might sell cheaper, but the bitterness of low quality drugs remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten.

The organisation's annual national conference comes up in Osogbo. It is tagged, 'Living Spring 2010'. The theme is Politics and ethical practice- a challenge to the community pharmacy. The sub themes are: Pharmacy Laws-review and Update; Herbal Pharmacy Practice- A new horizon; Mega drug distribution in Nigeria- The way forward. The key note address will be delivered by the past president of Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Dr U.N.O Uwaga.

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