



IFPMA improves Biomedical Data Transparency with Launch of First Worldwide Clinical Trials Portal

Geneva, September 21, 2005 – The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) today announced the launch of its new IFPMA Clinical Trials Portal. Developed in conjunction with information technology leader IBM, it is the first internet search engine constructed specifically to link to on-line information made available by the innovative pharmaceutical industry about clinical trials worldwide.

The IFPMA Clinical Trial Portal, which represents more than 7 months work by pharmaceutical industry technical and regulatory experts, as well as IBM consultants, currently contains more than 250,000 links. The Portal URL is: **www.ifpma.org/clinicaltrials**.

Dr. Daniel Vasella, Chairman and CEO of Novartis and President of the IFPMA, said: “Today, IFMPA is launching the first international web portal, to provide doctors, patients and their families with simple access to the most complete information on clinical trials of drugs and vaccines. The launch of this portal shows the pharmaceutical industry’s commitment to full transparency in the interest of patients and healthcare professionals.”

The Portal’s search engine has been programmed to access relevant on-line sources of clinical trial information. These include individual pharmaceutical company sites, sites run by third parties working on behalf of these companies, pharmaceutical industry association resources, such as the US pharmaceutical industry association (PhRMA) site www.clinicalstudyresults.org and government sites which routinely carry details of industry trials, such as the US National Library of Medicine’s www.clinicaltrials.gov. Other on-line clinical trial information resources, such as the European Union’s planned Europharm facility, may be linked to as and when they become available.

The Portal allows two broad types of information to be searched for. One is listings (registries) of on-going clinical trials, providing access to basic information, including: brief title, description in lay terms, trial phase, trial type (e.g. interventional), trial status, trial purpose (treatment / diagnosis / prevention), intervention type (e.g. drug / vaccine), condition or disease, key eligibility criteria (including gender & age), location of trial and contact information.

The other broad category of information to which the Portal provides links is the results of completed clinical trials, which are made available in a standard, non-promotional, summary format by various on-line databases.

The Portal unveiled today represents the first stage in the development of the pharmaceutical industry’s specialised worldwide clinical trial search engine. In this stage, priority was given to putting a useful information-gathering resource into the hands of patients and their carers as quickly as possible. This consideration led to the decision to

execute the stage one site with simple search functions, in English language. . Users are also provided with search tips, frequently asked questions about clinical trials and definitions of words related to clinical trials.

However, the pharmaceutical industry recognises that the ultimate effectiveness of the Portal will require further investment to increase its ease-of-use. To this end, the second stage of development is now underway. One improvement specifically targeted in this new stage is the provision of the ability to search in languages other than English. Another goal is to assist searchers who may have a limited knowledge of medical terminology. A number of tools are envisaged to help them, including the addition of dictionary-assisted entry of search criteria, correcting misspelled names of diseases and products, as well as suggesting synonyms. Multiple criteria searches should become possible, for example, allowing users to search by disease, geographical area or pharmaceutical company name.

The IFPMA Clinical Trials Portal helps to fulfil the commitment made by the research-based pharmaceutical industry in its “Joint Position on the Disclosure of Clinical Trial Information via Clinical Trial Registries and Databases”, issued in January 2005. This joint statement was developed by the IFPMA, the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA), the Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (JPMA), the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) and Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D), to provide a coherent industry blueprint for improving clinical trial transparency.

About IFPMA

The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation representing national industry associations and companies from both developed and developing countries. Member companies of the IFPMA are research-based pharmaceutical, biotech and vaccine companies. In the research and development pipeline, the pharmaceutical industry is working on more than 700 new medicines and vaccines to address a wide range of global disease threats, including cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and malaria.

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