

2. Wholesalers

The function of pharmaceutical wholesalers is to act as an intermediary between the pharmaceutical industry and their customers (e.g., hospital and community pharmacies) by purchasing and distributing medicines to their customers. With regard to patient safety they must guaranty that the quality of the products is kept through the whole distribution line and that the influx of counterfeited drugs is avoided. To meet this demand, wholesalers have developed sophisticated distribution logistics.

Recent experience from counterfeit cases demonstrated that the wholesalers may play an important role in protecting the drug market from counterfeited medicines.

The working group recommends that FIP encourage pharmaceutical wholesalers to follow their own code of ethics and have a system in place and adopt methods to avoid the purchase and distribution of counterfeit medicines. Wholesalers also should be asked to describe clearly what they do to avoid the purchase of counterfeits. In addition, the quality assurance measures of wholesalers and their customers should be linked to each other to make the quality chain function without gaps of information and documentation.