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Taiwan FDA hosts 2019 International Conference on Narcotics

September 10, 2019 | News

Aims to keep narcotics regulations up-to-date with international practice and to prevent narcotic misuse or abuse leading to addiction



In order to keep narcotics regulations up-to-date with international practice and to prevent narcotic misuse or abuse leading to addiction, Taiwan Food and Drug Administration of the Ministry of Health and Welfare organized the “2019 International Conference on Narcotics: Safe Use and Management” on 4 September 2019. The conference took place at NTUH International Convention Centre. Officials and experts from Europe, the U.S., Japan, and Thailand were invited to the event, to exchange insights on their management of narcotics and prevention of iatrogenic addiction with Taiwan’s government officials, scholars and experts.

Narcotic analgesics, including fentanyl, morphine, oxycodone and other opioids, are often used to treat moderate or severe pains, such as those caused by cancer and chronic non-cancer condition. However, these narcotic analgesics exhibit high potential for abuse and addiction, governments have reinforced the management over controlled drugs by licensing systems and scheduling management and to prevent them from entering the market and trigger abuse.

The conference invited a line-up of international speakers, including Dr Michael Evans-Brown of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA); Jeffrey M. Connors, Aziz Elkholy and John A. Pacella of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration; Yusuke Kanazawa, Chief, intelligence section of the Pharmaceutical Safety and Environmental Health Bureau under Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare; and Dr Weerawat Ukranun, Director of Thanyarak Maehongson Hospital, under Thailand’s Ministry of Public Health. They shed light on the abuse of narcotic analgesics in their countries, and the preventive measures being taken. The conference had also invited Dr Chih-Peng Lin, Chief of the Division of Pain Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology, and National Taiwan University Hospital, to share his insights on related issues in Taiwan from a clinical perspective.

About 150 exports from the medical communities and public health regulators participated in this event. By serving as a platform where experts can share and discuss experiences, the conference seeks to improve regulations and administration guidelines on narcotic analgesics and, ultimately, ensure public health and drug safety.