

South African Glaucoma Society: View on generic medication for Glaucoma

The South African Glaucoma Society is aware of the need for cost effective medicines for all the people of South Africa and welcomes all efforts and measures to make medicines more affordable to our citizens.

Generic medicines are increasingly being marketed in South Africa as one measure to achieve this aim. The South African Glaucoma Society welcomes this move but is cognisant of possible problems with some generic medicines. Generic medicines usually have the identical active ingredient but preservatives and other carrier mediums are not always equivalent to the original proprietary medication sometimes resulting in a poorer quality product and patient experience. The South African Glaucoma Society strongly opposes South Africa being used as a “dumping ground” for inferior sub-standard medication being passed off to a 3rd world country.

Quality generic medications delivering treatment to our patients at appropriate cost effective level is welcomed and to be encouraged.

The South African Glaucoma Society also recognises that proprietary pharmaceutical companies have added significant value in both development of new agents via research and trials and by continuing medical education of health personnel including doctors, pharmacist and nursing staff. These contributions to continuing professional education and development as well as research and development are welcomed and to be encouraged. We commend these companies and their efforts to South Africans and encourage these companies to seek ways to reduce the cost of their excellent products to South Africans once the patent periods of these medications have expired. This would not only be beneficial to the company's but also to South Africa and reduce our exposure to potentially sub-standard medicines.

Ratified SAGS EXCO 23/8/2017