

"Social Pharmacology a prominent discipline in public health"

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Traditionally, knowledge about drug mechanism of action and clinical use was derived largely from studies conducted by clinical pharmacologists and therapeutic specialists. More recently, a broader concept of drug use, Social Pharmacology, has attracted growing interest and recognition. Building on the foundation provided by clinical research, this discipline encompasses the multiple dimensions associated with "real world" use of drugs during the post-marketing period. Physicians, pharmacists, nurses, biologists, epidemiologists, economists together with lawyers and regulatory administrators, insurance specialists and communications specialists all contribute to this broader assessment of drug use. Thus, Social Pharmacology brings together a broad collection of disciplines pertaining to evaluating efficacy, safety, effectiveness, compliance, self-medication and consumption of economic resources associated with use of pharmaceutical products. Application of evidence-based treatment guidelines, measures of drug utilization in both individual patients and in populations, safety assessments, and use of quality assurance tools including formularies are among the tools used to direct and evaluate product use. This report seeks to describe these new relationships, suggest integrative methodologies and identify critical public policy issues. The background of this new approach relies on a reference book on Social Pharmacology published in 1985 (J.L. Alloza (Ed.), *Clinical and Social Pharmacology. Postmarketing Period*, Editio Cantor, Aulendorf, Germany 1985)

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