

Govt ignores huge difference between import cost & MRP

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A report by the Maharashtra FDA cites the example of drug-eluting stents manufactured by Abbotts Vascular Devices Holland BV, a Holland-based firm. These stents were imported into India by Abbotts Healthcare Pvt Ltd at Rs 40,710 and sold to the distributor, Sinocare, at Rs 73,440 against a marked MRP of Rs 1.5 lakh. The distributor then sold it at Rs 1.1 lakh to Hinduja hospital, which in turn charged the patient Rs 1.2 lakh, a near three-fold jump over the import price.

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der (DPCO). Hence, their prices are neither monitored nor controlled. The multinational companies that dominate the market import the devices and mark an MRP they think the market can bear in the absence of any regulation. These devices even get customs duty concessions, the duty on car-

diac stents being zero.

The NPPA has neither replied to the Maharashtra FDA after the report sent over a year ago nor has it taken any action on pricing. When contacted, NPPA chairperson Injeti Srinivas told TOI that he was not aware of the FDA report as he had joined recently (in June) and that he would look into it.

"If the government was serious about doing something, it would have brought in price control as is done in even rich Western countries. The government knows this is happening because they can see the huge difference in cost between the import price and the price at which these devices are being sold to patients even in government hospitals. They just choose to close their eyes to this," lamented a senior doctor at a government hospital.

Princy