

## NON-ESSENTIAL DRUGS

# NPPA withdraws price control order

**NEW DELHI:** The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has withdrawn its order to fix prices of drugs, which are not under the list of

essential medicines, a move that has been welcomed by the pharmaceutical industry. The NPPA had late on Monday issued a statement,

saying it has withdrawn guidelines for price control issued under Para 19 of the Drug Prices Control Order (DPCO), 2013.

The Paragraph 19 of the DPCO, 2013, authorises the NPPA to control the prices of drugs that are not under the NLEM (National List of Essential Medicines) under extraordinary circumstances in public interest. The NPPA had invoked Para 19 of the DPCO to cap prices of 108 medicines, including cardiac, diabetes and HIV/AIDS drugs, last month.

"In compliance with the directions received from the government in the Department of Pharmaceuticals...the aforesaid internal guidelines issued by the NPPA on May 29, 2014 under Paragraph 19 of DPCO 2013 are, hereby, withdrawn with immediate effect," the NPPA said in a statement.

The order will be effective prospectively.

An NPPA official explained that the order meant that the powers the authority drew from the DPCO for fixing caps for non-essential drugs is no longer available.

"The plain reading of the order is that a guideline under DPCO 2013 has been withdrawn with immediate effect, that is, from September 22," he said.

Several industry bodies, including the Indian Pharma Alliance (IPA), had criticised the NPPA's move to cap the prices of medicines not under NLEM. Under the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) 2013, the government already controls the prices of 348 drugs listed in the NLEM. — PTI

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