

Trading Away Access to Medicines - Revisited

Insufficient innovation and a lack of access to affordable medicines are major barriers to achieving the right to health in low- and middle-income countries. The lack of a vaccine or treatment for the deadly Ebola virus highlights the need for new ideas of how to finance pharmaceutical research and development (R&D). Trade policies should not be used as a tool to defend the status quo, which rewards research with monopolies. Instead, innovative models that create new, affordable medicines should be supported. Members of the new European Parliament and EU Member states must ensure that the incoming European Commission defends a trade and R&D model that is coherent with its development and public health objectives. This should begin by ensuring that the 'regulatory harmonization' to be enshrined in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership will not lock in regulations that serve corporate over public interests, and set new global standards that will later be imposed on developing countries.

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