Ethics in Pharmaceutical Companies

Name

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Summary

Pharmaceutical companies go all over the country selling different medications to different doctors. The ethics behind how this transaction is done has come into question in the media and online as of late.

Doctors who buy the pharmaceuticals will profit from writing the prescription for a patient. They gain a percentage of the profit for every prescription they write. So if a patient is sick and needs to be helped by a doctor, that doctor has an incentive to write a prescription for that brand of medication.

Prices for prescriptions can run as high as $1000 per prescription for live-saving medicine that may or may not be covered by the insurance company. Friends have had the personal experience where she paid $0 for a prescription and then went back two months later and the pharmaceutical company had changed their price to $55 per prescription after insurance covered most of it. These prices aren’t exactly patient friendly for those who need something to save their body from being destroyed.

Doctor’s offices will be littered with pharmaceutical memorabilia such as; notepads, stress balls and pens. Pharmaceutical companies will take them out to fancy restaurants, buy them takeout for the office or even offer them expensive tickets to a sports game or concert just to have a few moments of their time to convince them to buy their pharmaceutical products.

Many of these tactics wouldn’t seem so unethical, if it wasn’t a company that offers life-saving opportunities for those inflicted with a disease or illness that they could not have prevented. Is it truly ethical for a business such as a pharmaceutical company to allow doctors to profit from each prescription written, change the price of prescriptions for a higher profit margin or wine and dine the doctors to gain a sale? Would you want your doctor to participate in these activities?

Outline

* Introduction to what pharmaceutical companies are
  + Some problems they might have ethically
  + List of cases against pharmaceutical companies.
* Ethical Dilemma 1: Is it ethical for a doctor to profit from you being ill?
  + Why is it an ethical dilemma? (Doctors are profiting from you being sick and asking for help).
  + What could solve this ethical dilemma? (Doctors no longer profiting from each prescription they write).
* Ethical Dilemma 2: Prices aren’t always patient friendly
  + Why is it an ethical dilemma? (Medicine will sit in a warehouse because people cannot afford the treatment and then be destroyed.)
  + What could solve this ethical dilemma?  (Lower prices to allow for treatment of those affected and make them more insurance friendly.)
* Ethical Dilemma 3: Wining and dining doctors just to gain a sale.
  + Why is this an ethical dilemma? Doctors will gain perks just to listen to some salesperson talk about their product and chose that one over someone else’s.
  + What could be a solution to this dilemma? Pharmaceutical companies need to be nonprofit or work directly with the government/ insurance companies to alleviate being a salesperson.
* Issue One: Adderall
  + Background: What is Adderall for? Who is prescribed and how easy is it to get it?
* Issue Two: Off-brand
  + Background: Better than name brands? Can I buy this off the shelf? What is the difference?
* Conclusion of pharmaceutical ethical dilemmas
  + List the three ethical dilemmas again
  + List the issues again

References

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Links regarding adderall:

<http://www.ethicssage.com/2013/08/the-ethics-of-student-use-of-adderall-.html>

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/neurologists-warn-against-prescribing-adhd-drugs-to-kids-as-study-drugs/>