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## PRESS RELEASE

Pakistan Medical Association (PMA) is very much concerned over the announcement of 15% hike in the medicine prices by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) with the consent of the federal government of Pakistan.

It is very distressing that instead of providing any relieve to the masses, government has increased the medicine prices which was already out of reach of the poor people. The painful aspect of this development is that prices of **life saving drugs** have also been increased. In such conditions when there is scarcity of health facilities at public hospitals, this increment of medicine prices will add to the misery of the people.

Fifty percent population of the country lives below the poverty line; these people visit public hospitals for their medical treatment. The conditions of the public hospitals are very poor. It is the responsibility of the Government to improve these facilities. Government should provide free medicine to all the patients coming to the Government run hospitals.

PMA suggests that Government should ponder some other ways to minimize the effect of increasing the cost of medicine because of devaluation of Pakistani Currency. It could be done by supporting pharmaceutical companies through reducing taxes and cut in import duty of the raw material for drugs manufacturing and packaging. Vaccines and raw material for medicine should be produced in the country. Fake, counterfeit drugs and medicine smuggling should be eliminated on priority basis.

PMA demands from the Federal Government to review its decision and withdraw this notification of increment of drug prices to ease the difficulties of the poor people already suffering from the inflation and bad economic situation in the country.

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