

24 February 2020

PRESS RELEASE

Pharmacies Must Disclose Dispensing Fees

Pharmacies must disclose and charge the correct dispensing fees at all times to avoid confusion for consumers.

This call comes after a complaint was received by the Consumer Council of Fiji from a consumer who took prescription to a pharmacy to purchase medicine and noted the contrasting prices between the shelf price and Point-of-Sale. Upon asking the pharmacist, the consumer was advised that an additional \$1 was charged as a dispensing fee together with the cost of the medicine.

The complaint prompted the Council to conduct a quick survey of pharmacies in the Central Division to ascertain whether additional fees and charges were disseminated to consumers prior to purchases. The findings of the survey revealed that none of the pharmacies displayed notices on dispensing fees to inform consumers.

Ms Shandil said that consumers have the right to be informed and right to choose, therefore notices indicating the different charges should be displayed ensuring that consumers have all related information to decide on their purchases. Additionally, this will ensure price transparency and ethical business practise by pharmacies.

Pharmacists are reminded that Section 4 (e) of the Final Authorisation on Prices for Essential Pharmaceutical Products by Fiji Competition and Consumer Commission clearly states that “a further dispensing fee of \$0.45 VEP is allowed on each item prescribed by a physician as is the current practice”. As such they are urged to remain within the limits as indicated in the legislation.

Consumers are also urged to exercise their responsibility by checking the price of medicines on the shelves and at the POS and question the pharmacists on the total cost of medications before purchases are made. Questioning will also allow consumers to know the total cost, hence do comparative shopping and save money.

Consumers may contact the Council’s toll- free National Consumer helpline 155 to seek further advice on this matter or to lodge a complaint.

Head Office

Level 5 Vanua House
Victoria Parade, Suva
Phone: 3300792/3310183
CEO: 3305864
Fax: 3300115
Email: complaints@consumersfiji.org

Lautoka/West

Suite 4 Popular Building
Vidilo Street
P.O. Box 5396, Lautoka
Phone: 6664987
Email: consumerlwk@connect.com.fj

Labasa/North

Level 1, Lot 41 Raza Properties Ltd
Nasekula Road
P.O. Box 64, Labasa
Phone: 8812559
Email: colbs@connect.com.fj



@ConsumersFj



Consumer Council of Fiji



www.consumersfiji.org

Ms Seema Shandil
Chief Executive Officer
Consumer Council of Fiji

Head Office

Level 5 Vanua House
Victoria Parade, Suva
Phone: 3300792/3310183
CEO: 3305864
Fax: 3300115
Email: complaints@consumersfiji.org

Lautoka/West

Suite 4 Popular Building
Vidilo Street
P.O. Box 5396, Lautoka
Phone: 6664987
Email: consumerltk@connect.com.fj

Labasa/North

Level 1, Lot 41 Raza Properties Ltd
Nasekula Road
P.O. Box 64, Labasa
Phone: 8812559
Email: colbs@connect.com.fj