

Invitation



Universiteit Utrecht



Utrecht University (UU, Netherlands) and Durham University (DU, England)
jointly organise the Brocher symposium:

Equitable access to controlled medicine: between drug control and human rights in post-market access in low- and middle-income countries

The pharmaceutical life cycle is underpinned by a notion of mutual benefit. Participation in clinical trials is justified by the greater good, namely developing medicines to address society's most pressing medical needs. In other words, drug development briefly equals drug availability. It would be unrealistic to state that every individual participating in a clinical trial should have direct access to all medicines this person needs on a lifelong basis for access to medicines is subject to a complex interplay of factors, which often set a resource intense or disadvantageous threshold for low- and middle income countries. Hence, especially in resource poor regions equitable access is far from reality despite the profound need for such care. The result being, millions of patients suffer in disabling conditions, which could amount to violating their human rights. These factors include restrictive trade agreements and patent laws, malfunctioning or slowly adapting health systems, or vastly administrative and strict control procedures. These so-called general barriers principally apply to all medicines, regardless of their classification. However, to a small sub-class of medicines - controlled medicines - additional barriers apply. Controlled medicines are those medicines of which the active substance is scheduled under the international drug control treaties. These additional barriers apply exactly because of their controlled nature, including the international drug control system, which is held to lead to a major public health deficit: many patients cannot access controlled medicines because of the restrictive and prohibitive nature of drug control regulation, which in itself is held to increase the number of patients in need of controlled medicines. In 2011, the Global Commission on Drug Policy labeled the 'war on drugs' as failed and issued a call for revision. In response to this call, Utrecht University organised the expert meeting: *"Human Rights and International Drug Control: Status quo, challenges, and interdisciplinary perspective"* in November 2012 in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The present symposium is a follow-up to this meeting. The set-up is to scrutinize the deficit from a multidisciplinary perspective in light of advancing post-market access in low- and middle-income countries as the equitable end-point of the pharmaceutical life cycle.

We hope to have compiled a stimulating and interesting multidisciplinary programme with ample time for discussion and debate. Please see below the draft programme.

The event is sponsored and hosted by the [Brocher Foundation](#) and co-sponsored by Utrecht University with a matching grant of the [Dutch Medicines Evaluation Board](#). The Brocher Foundation is a Swiss private, non-profit organization supporting and encouraging multidisciplinary research into ethical, legal, and social implications of new medical developments. Its scientific board is composed of leading international experts.

The Brocher foundation will host the event at its Hermance domain: Route d'Hermance 471, Case postale 21, 1248 Hermance – Switzerland. Should you be interested in participation, please register via the [Brocher website](#). The participation fee is 150CHF. The participation fee includes dinner on the Thursday and lunch on both days of the symposium. Please be aware that spaces are limited and financial assistance is unfortunately not available.

Should you have any further questions, please contact Ms. Marie Elske Gispen (m.e.c.gispen@uu.nl) directly.

We very much hope this event is of your interest and are looking forward to welcoming you in Hermance,

Marie Elske Gispen (UU) and Deryck Beyleveld (DU)

Preliminary programme

Day 1: Thursday 8 October 2015 (full day)

8.30-8.55 Coffee and registration

8.55-9.00 Welcome

Marie Elske Gispen, Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM)/Ethics Institute, Utrecht University

Session 1: Equitable access to controlled medicine: an introduction

Moderator: Marcus Düwell, Ethics Institute, Utrecht University

9.00-9.15 Call for revision

Ruth Dreifuss, Global Commission on Drug Policy

9.15-9.45 Towards a human rights-based model of drug-control to advance access to controlled medicine in LMICs: introduction and preliminary conclusions

Marie Elske Gispen

9.45-9.55 Critical legal questions

Brigit Toebe, University of Groningen

9.55-10.05 Critical ethical questions

Deryck Beyleveld, Durham University

10.05-10.15 Critical social scientific questions

Alex Stevens, Kent University

Session 2: Continuous constraints and challenges: international, regional, and local perspectives

Moderator: Brigit Toebe

11.00-11.15 Global and regional perspectives on drug control

Damon Barrett, International Centre on Human Rights and Drug Control/ University of Stockholm

11.15-11.30 Global perspectives on access to controlled medication

Martha Maurer, Pain & Policy Study Group

11.30-11.45 Regional perspectives on access to controlled medicine: lessons learned from the Access to Opioid Medicines in Europe (ATOME) project

Lukas Radbruch, Bonn University/ATOME-project

11.45-12.00 Regional perspectives on access to controlled medicine: implementing palliative care models in Africa

Fatia Kiyange, African Palliative Care Association

12.00-12.15 Local realities of access to controlled medicine provision:

Mhoira Leng, Mulago Palliative Care Unit

12.15-13.00 Panel discussion: what's the state of play?

Session 3: Mandates to advance access to controlled medicines under international law: an interplay of the human rights and drug control frameworks

Moderator: xxx

Preliminary programme

- 14.00-14.15 The role of UN human rights treaty bodies
Nico Schrijver, CESCR
- 14.15-14.30 The role of special rapporteurs
Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights Special Procedures Section - TBC
- 14.30-14.45 The role of the International Narcotics Control Board
International Narcotics Control Board - TBC
- 14.45-15.00 Programmatic actors: UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- 15.00-15.15 Programmatic actors: WHO
Gilles Forte, WHO Essential Medicines and Health Products
- 15.15-15.30 Advocacy and the role of civil society
Katherine Pettus, International Association Hospice & Palliative Care
- 15.30-15.45 Coffee break
- 15.45-17.30 Panel discussion: towards a synergetic interpretation?

Dinner [time/place tbc]

Day 2: Friday 9 October 2015 (half day)

Session 4: Advancing a research agenda: theory and practice

Moderator: Marie Elske Gispen

- 9.00-9.25 State of play of pharmaceutical policy analysis studies
Aukje Mantel, Utrecht University WHO Collaborating Centre on Pharmaceutical Policy Analysis, Utrecht University
- 9.25-9.40 Towards a theory of access to medicines
Marcus Düwell
- 9.40-9.55 Conflicts and human rights aspects of access to medicines studies
Brianne McGonigle Leyh, Netherlands Institute of Human Rights
- 9.55-10.10 Access to medicines studies in LMICs
Tim Reed, Health Action International
- 10.10-10.25 Coffee break
- 10.25-10.40 Lessons from access to diabetes medicines for controlled medicines
David Beran, Geneva University Hospitals (Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève) and Geneva University (Université de Genève)
- 10.40-10.55 Practical aspects of implementing palliative care models in LMICs in future research
Chitra Venkateswaran, Founder/Clinical Director MEHAC Foundation

Preliminary programme

10.55-11.40	Panel discussion: what's next?
11.40-12.25	Focus group discussion
12.25-13.00	Drafting of research agenda, post-symposium planning, and closure
13.00-14.00	Lunch

NB: The Brocher Foundation reserves the right to tape and video record the symposium including all sessions. Consent forms will be handed out during the symposium in case any participant would refuse to be filmed.