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Disease Mongering

“Disease mongering is a pejorative term for a perceived practice of widening the diagnostic boundaries of illnesses, and promoting public awareness of such, in order to expand the markets for those who sell and deliver treatments, which may include pharmaceutical companies, physicians, and other professional or consumer organizations.”

Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disease_mongering

Inaugural Conference on Disease Mongering

“The ascendancy of market logic has both expanded and legitimised the commercialisation of medicine. In the pharmaceutical sector, competitive enterprise dominates not only the development of drugs -and increasingly their diffusion - but also the very definitions of the illnesses they are used to treat... Examples of disorders that have been represented in this way are as diverse as male and female erectile dysfunction, social anxiety disorder, alopecia, and irritable bowel. No-one questions that some individuals suffering from these 'conditions' experience genuine morbidity. The 'disorders' are also difficult to define and quantify, tend to be chronic and in some cases seem to represent normal human variation or the predictable but undesired effects of ageing. “(Newcastle, Australia, 2006). Conference abstracts and links to other web-based resources on this topic.

URL: <http://www.diseasemongering.org/>

A Collection of Articles on Disease Mongering in *PLOS MEDICINE*

PLoS Medicine is a peer-reviewed, international, open-access journal publishing important original research and analysis relevant to human health.

URL: <http://collections.plos.org/plosmedicine/diseasemongering-2006.php>

Moynihan R., Heath J., Henry D. Selling sickness: the pharmaceutical industry and disease mongering. *BMJ* 2002;324:886-891

“A lot of money can be made from healthy people who believe they are sick. Pharmaceutical companies sponsor diseases and promote them to prescribers and consumers. Ray Moynihan, Iona Heath, and David Henry give examples of "disease mongering" and suggest how to prevent the growth of this practice.” Free full-text.

URL: <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7342/886>

Shankar PR, Subish P. Disease mongering. *Singapore medical journal*, 2007 Apr;48(4):275-80

“The cost of disease mongering to the individual and the community is expected to be high. Some authors have argued that medicalisation of illnesses may not be a problem and the real problem may be the lack of medicines. Doctors will play a key role in combating disease mongering. Disentanglement from the pharmaceutical industry and development of a capacity for critical analysis are required. Educating patients and empowering them to make decisions are important. Several initiatives have been undertaken to combat disease mongering. Initiatives at the level of the patient and the physician are especially important. Studies on the extent and knowledge of disease mongering among doctors and medical students, and their economic and social consequences are urgently required.” Free full-text.

URL: <http://smj.sma.org.sg/4804/4804ra1.pdf>

V. Vlasov. Disease Mongering. *Published in the newspaper «Herald of the Moscow Municipal Scientific Society of Internists» #17, September 2006 (In Russian)*

“In Russian, meaning of the word «mongering» (selling, promoting something unnecessary for consumers) is best of all expressed with a word «впаривание». «Disease mongering» is disease promotion widening the perception of being unhealthy and expanding markets for those who sell and deliver treatments.”

URL: <http://www.zdrav.net/antiad/vpar>

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