

Physicians' Responses to Marketing Strategies of
Pharmaceutical Companies in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the physicians' responses towards the promotional tactics commonly used by pharmaceutical companies. Two hundred and fifty questionnaires were randomly distributed to the physicians operating in the private, government and university-based hospitals. Seventy-three usable replies were received. The results showed that physicians in general viewed non-commercial sources of drug information, i.e. medical books, guidelines, medical journal, conference and other physicians as more useful source of information compared to the commercial sources, i.e. advertisement, sales representative, free sample and direct mailing by pharmaceutical companies. Similar pattern was observed whereby physicians rated the non-commercial sources of influence higher compared to commercial source of influence on their prescribing practice. The non-commercial sources of influence include personal experience with the drug, recommendations by colleagues and clinical papers. Implications of the study and recommendations to managers were discussed in this report.

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