Alleged Misuse of Sovaldi for Hepatitis C Genotype 4 in Egypt

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The Egyptian Health Ministry is facing accusations from an international group of pharmaceutical companies and medical professionals that it has been exploiting some Egyptians living with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), Al Monitor reports.

The Syndicate of Pharmacists alleges that the ministry used Egyptian patients to evaluate the efficacy of Gilead Sciences' hep C drug Sovaldi (sofosbuvir) on people with genotype 4 of the virus. Sovaldi has not yet been approved for people with that HCV type anywhere in the world.

Allegedly thousands of hep C patients in the country applied directly to the ministry to obtain the drug and were provided Sovaldi via major pharmacies in Egypt. So far, only 28 patients in the United States and 100 patients in Egypt with hep C genotype 4 have been given the drug in clinical trials. Experts across the board agree that this is insufficient evidence to attest to its safety in this population.

The syndicate's board is in the process of taking legal action against the Egyptian government. The ministry faces charges of endangering patients and violating the terms of the importation, registration and trading of Sovaldi.

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