

'The Role of Patent Law in Regulating Access to Medicines'

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Even with the uniform patent protection and enforcement provided by TRIPS and the WTO, there is now a growing body of evidence that both the rate of drug innovation and pharmaceutical company profits are falling. History shows that patents are not the promoters of innovation that the pharmaceutical industry would like us to believe. The overwhelming evidence appears to confirm that, rather than improving access to medicines, the patent system actually encourages research and investment into medicines that produce the greatest profit for the least cost – not necessarily medicines that will alleviate human suffering, especially in developing countries.