

Medicines legislation and regulation in England, 1500–2020

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Abstract

The initial purposes of regulation of medicines in England were principally to raise government revenue, to discourage murder by poisoning, and to regulate the activities of pharmacists. It was only much later that regulators sought to ensure that medicines were of good quality, reasonably safe, and at least somewhat effective, and to regulate misuse of drugs. Here we survey the history of the regulation of medicines and poisons in England from the perspective of clinicians with an interest in therapeutics.

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