

ANONYMOUS v LUNDBECK

Reference to location of prescribing information

An anonymous complainant alleged that on a two page advertisement for Cipralex (escitalopram), placed by Lundbeck in The Pharmaceutical Journal, the statement 'For references and prescribing information, see overleaf' was too small.

The detailed response from Lundbeck is given below.

The Panel noted that the reference to where the prescribing information was to be found was in type such that a lower case 'x' would be smaller than 2mm in height. The Panel ruled a breach of the Code as acknowledged by Lundbeck.

An anonymous complaint was received about the statement regarding the location of the prescribing information in an advertisement for Cipralex (escitalopram) (ref 1009/ESC/501/188) placed by Lundbeck Ltd in The Pharmaceutical Journal, 28 November 2009. The advertisement consisted of two pages, a right hand page followed by a left hand page. The statement 'For references and prescribing information, see overleaf' was approximately two thirds of the way down the right hand page at the end of the right hand column of text and above a table of data.

COMPLAINT

The complainant stated that according to the Code, if the prescribing information was overleaf, there must be a statement on its location such that a lower case 'x' was no less than 2mm in height. The statement in the Cipralex advertisement was too small.

When writing to Lundbeck, the Authority asked it to respond in relation to Clause 4.7 of the Code.

RESPONSE

Lundbeck stated that copy which was sent to the

journal had a lower case font size of 1.7mm for the reference regarding the location of the prescribing information. Lundbeck accepted that this did not comply with Clause 4.7 of the Code and it had taken immediate corrective action with respect to this particular advertisement. Lundbeck had also checked other material both in use and in development to ensure that this error had not been repeated.

In addition, Lundbeck had brought this case to the attention of all those involved in the development and approval of promotional material both inside the company and at the advertising agencies it currently used. This was a fundamental error with respect to Code compliance and should not have occurred. All relevant personnel had been reminded of this and of the importance of complying with the Code both to the letter and in spirit.

Lundbeck emphasised that it remained fully committed to the Code at all levels in the organisation. Adherence to the Code featured prominently throughout the activities of the company and personnel received regular training and updates on the Code and its developments.

PANEL RULING

The Panel noted that the reference to where the prescribing information was to be found was in type such that a lower case 'x' would be smaller than 2mm in height. The Panel ruled a breach of Clause 4.7 as acknowledged by Lundbeck. Further, the Panel noted that the reference was not on the outer edge of the advertisement as required by the Code.

Complaint received 2 December 2009

Case completed 26 January 2010
