

## PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES CODE OF PRACTICE AUTHORITY

**Sanofi-Aventis, Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals UK Limited, AstraZeneca UK Limited, Takeda UK Limited, Pfizer Limited and Eli Lilly and Company Limited have each breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and/or reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.**

**Sanofi-Aventis and Procter & Gamble - Cases AUTH/1902/10/06 and AUTH/1903/10/06**

**For linking the provision of a nurse audit service programme, offered by Aventis (prior to its merger to become Sanofi-Aventis) and Procter & Gamble, to the prescription of a medicine in instructions to representatives, breaches of the following clauses of the 2003 Code were ruled:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 18.1 - Failing to comply with the requirements for the provision of medical and educational goods and services.

Both companies were also audited on their procedures in relation to the Code.

**AstraZeneca - Case AUTH/1977/3/07**

**For use of two items (an insert sent with The Pharmaceutical Journal and a primary care trust's prescribing guidelines) which were deemed to be misleading and to constitute disguised promotion, AstraZeneca was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 4.1 - Failing to include prescribing information.
- Clause 7.2 - Failing to ensure that all claims were accurate, balanced, fair, unambiguous and based on up-to-date evidence.
- Clause 7.3 - Using a comparison that was misleading.
- Clause 7.10 - Failing to encourage the rational use of a medicine.
- Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain a high standard.
- Clause 9.10 - Failing to clearly indicate sponsorship of materials.
- Clause 10.1 - Disguising promotional material and activities.

AstraZeneca was also audited on its procedures in relation to the Code and publicly reprimanded for not fully investigating the matter of the guidelines when responding to the complainant and Code of Practice Panel.

**Takeda - Case AUTH/2012/6/07**

**For not ensuring that a mailing to health professionals was up-to-date and for further use of a claim acknowledged in inter-company correspondence to be in breach, Takeda was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 7.2 - Failing to ensure that all claims were accurate, balanced, fair, unambiguous and based on up-to-date evidence.
- Clause 7.3 - Using a comparison which was misleading.
- Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain a high standard.

### **Pfizer - Case AUTH/2023/7/07**

**For a GP referral aid which included an exaggerated claim, encouraged those who were not health professionals to make clinical judgements and undermined the GP's ability to make an independent prescribing decision, Pfizer was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 7.10 - Making an exaggerated claim.
- Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain a high standard.

Pfizer was also required to recover the GP referral aids.

### **Procter & Gamble - Case AUTH/2036/8/07**

**The company voluntarily advised the PMCPA that it had advertised a prescription only medicine to the public. Procter & Gamble was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain a high standard.
- Clause 20.1 - Advertising a prescription only medicine to the public.

### **Lilly - Case AUTH/2044/9/07**

**For a representative, acting on his own initiative, who linked financial support to a local clinical network to the prescription of medicines, Lilly was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:**

- Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, or reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain a high standard.
- Clause 15.2 - Failure of a representative to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct.
- Clauses 18.1 and 18.4 - Failing to comply with the requirements for the provision of medical and educational goods and services.

The full case reports were published in the PMCPA November Code of Practice Review and are also available at [www.pmcpa.org.uk](http://www.pmcpa.org.uk)

**The Prescription Medicines Code of Practice Authority (PMCPA) administers The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry's (ABPI) Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry at arm's length from the Association itself. The Code covers the promotion of medicines for prescribing to health professionals and the provision of information to the public about prescription only medicines.**

**If you have any concerns about the activities of pharmaceutical companies in this regard, please contact the PMCPA at 12 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2DY or [complaints@pmcpa.org.uk](mailto:complaints@pmcpa.org.uk).**

**The Code and other information, including details about ongoing cases can be found on the [PMCPA website](http://www.pmcpa.org.uk).**