

The ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry sets standards for the promotion of medicines for prescribing to health professionals and the provision of information to the public about prescription only medicines. Publicity is the main sanction when breaches of the Code are ruled. The latest cases ruled in breach of Clause 2 of the Code (a sign of particular censure) are highlighted below.

**Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd, Novo Nordisk Limited, Eli Lilly and Company Limited and Boehringer Ingelheim 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.**

**Novartis – Case AUTH/2201/1/09**

For a press release about Femara (a prescription only medicine) which was misleading, raised unfounded hopes of successful treatment and would, in effect, encourage patients to ask their health professional to prescribe it, Novartis was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon and reducing confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 22.2** - Issuing misleading information and encouraging members of the public to ask their health professional to prescribe a specific prescription only medicine.

**Novo Nordisk – Case AUTH/2202/1/09**

For contributing an article which promoted one of its unlicensed medicines and would encourage patients to ask their health professional to prescribe it, in a company sponsored supplement distributed with a national newspaper, Novo Nordisk was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon and reducing confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 3.1** - Promoting a medicine prior to the grant of a marketing authorization which permits its sale or supply.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 22.1** - Promoting a prescription only medicine to the public.
- Clause 22.2** - Encouraging members of the public to ask their health professional to prescribe a specific prescription only medicine.

**Eli Lilly and Company Limited and Boehringer Ingelheim Limited – Cases AUTH/2213/3/09 and AUTH/2214/3/09**

For presenting the output of a company run meeting as an independent supplement to a medical journal, Lilly and Boehringer Ingelheim were each ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon and reducing confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 12.1** - Disguising promotional material and activities.

The full case reports were published in the PMCPA May 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.