

MAY 2008

PMCPA

Prescription Medicines
Code of Practice Authority

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 case ruled in breach of Clause 2 of the Code (a sign of particular censure) is highlighted below.

Roche Products Limited has breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

As a result of inter-company dialogue, Roche voluntarily admitted that it had promoted a prescription only medicine to the public via a one page article in the 2007 version of In the Pink magazine. Roche 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 a high standard.
- Clause 20.1** - Advertising a prescription only medicine to the public.
- Clause 20.2** - Encouraging members of the public to ask their health professional to prescribe a specific prescription only medicine.

The full case report (Case AUTH/2098/2/08) was published in the PMCPA May Code of Practice Review and is also available at 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**.

The Code and other information, including details about ongoing cases can be found on the PMCPA website.