



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 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, Pfizer and Otsuka have breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

### Novartis – Case AUTH/3725/1/23

For failing to update and recertify two documents hosted on a Novartis website to include up-to-date Entresto (sacubitril/valsartan) prescribing information, for the length of time one of the documents had been available with out-of-date prescribing information, and because the out-of-date prescribing information had the potential to impact patient safety, Novartis was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the 2021 Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry
- Clause 5.1** - Failing to maintain high standards
- Clause 12.1** - Failing to include up-to-date prescribing information

### Otsuka – Case AUTH/3757/3/23

For failing to disclose relevant information in its response to a previous case in 2015, and because interviewees had not been given the opportunity to agree and sign the witness statements produced as a record of their interviews and submitted to the PMCPA, Otsuka was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the 2015 Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards

### Pfizer – Case AUTH/3741/2/23

For promoting an unlicensed vaccine, including to members of the public on Twitter, Pfizer was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the 2019 Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry
- Clause 3.1** - Promoting an unlicensed medicine
- Clause 7.2** - Making a misleading claim
- Clause 7.9** - Making claims that did not reflect the available evidence regarding possible adverse reactions
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards

The case reports are available at [www.pmcpa.org.uk](http://www.pmcpa.org.uk).

The Prescription Medicines Code of Practice Authority (PMCPA) was established by The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) to operate the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry independently of the ABPI. The PMCPA is a division of the ABPI. 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 2nd Floor, Goldings House, Hay's Galleria, 2 Hay's Lane, London, SE1 2HB or email: [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: [www.pmcpa.org.uk](http://www.pmcpa.org.uk).