

Vifor Pharma, Celgene, Takeda and Pierre Fabre have breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

Vifor Pharma – Case AUTH/2828/3/16

For producing material that caused its representatives to create doubt about the safety of a competitor product and make misleading comparisons with Ferinject (ferric carboxymaltose for injection/infusion) and for providing an unsolicited promotional email from its medical information department that was not fair or balanced about adverse reactions, Vifor was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 7.2** - Making misleading comparisons.
- Clause 7.4** - Making claims incapable of substantiation.
- Clause 7.9** - Making claims about adverse reactions not capable of substantiation.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 9.9** - Sending a promotional email without the prior permission of the recipient.
- Clause 15.2** - Representatives failing to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct.
- Clause 15.9** - Producing representatives' briefing material that was likely to lead to them breaching the Code.

The full case report was published in the PMCPA February 2017 Code of Practice Review and is available at www.pmcpa.org.uk.

Voluntary admission by Celgene – Case AUTH/2831/4/16

Celgene made a voluntary admission in relation to the organisation and the materials produced for two meetings arranged to promote Otezla (apremilast) and was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 4.1** - Failing to include prescribing information.
- Clause 4.10** - Failing to include information on adverse events.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 14.1** - Failing to certify, check and sign material in its final form.

Clause 15.2 - Representatives and their manager failing to maintain a high standard of ethical conduct.

Clause 18.1 - Providing an inducement to prescribe or recommend a medicine.

Clause 26.1 - Promoting a prescription only medicine to the public.

The Code of Practice Panel reported Celgene to the Code of Practice Appeal Board. The interim case report is available at www.pmcpa.org.uk.

Takeda – Case AUTH/2862/8/16

For linking the company's funding of a course in return for a health professional's support for one of its medicines, Takeda was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the 2014 Code:

Clause 2 - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

Clause 9.1 - Failing to maintain high standards.

Clause 18.1 - Providing an inducement to prescribe to an individual.

Clause 18.6 - Providing an inducement to prescribe to an organisation comprised of health professionals.

The full case report was published in the PMCPA February 2017 Code of Practice Review and is available at www.pmcpa.org.uk.

Pierre Fabre – Case AUTH/2914/12/16

For failing to quality check bags that had been stored in a basement for 3 years before supplying them to pharmacies to use when dispensing Navelbine (vinorelbine) Oral to patients, Pierre Fabre 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.

The full case report was published in the PMCPA February 2017 Code of Practice Review and is available at 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 7th Floor, 105 Victoria St, London, SW1E 6QT or email: 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