

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.

**Novo Nordisk Limited, Eli Lilly and Company Limited, Grünenthal Ltd and Napp Pharmaceuticals 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. In addition, Novo Nordisk has been publicly reprimanded.**

**Novo Nordisk – Case AUTH/2234/5/09**

For promoting Victoza prior to the receipt of its marketing authorization on a number of occasions, making claims and comparisons that were misleading, disguising promotional material and failing to provide information which reflected available evidence, 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 its marketing authorization.
- Clause 7.2** - Making misleading claims.
- Clause 7.3** - Using misleading comparisons.
- Clause 7.9** - Failing to provide information about side-effects and reflect available evidence.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 12.1** - Disguising promotional material.

Novo Nordisk was also publicly reprimanded by the Code of Practice Appeal Board.

**Novo Nordisk – Case AUTH/2269/9/09**

For failing to comply with an undertaking not to use material previously ruled in breach of the Code and for providing inaccurate information in that undertaking, 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 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 25** - Failing to comply with an undertaking.

Novo Nordisk was also publicly reprimanded by the Code of Practice Appeal Board.

**Lilly – Case AUTH/2310/4/10**

For promoting a medicine before the grant of the marketing authorization, 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 3.1** - Promoting a medicine prior to the grant of the marketing authorization.
- Clause 7.2** - Making misleading claims.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.

**Grünenthal – Case AUTH/2330/7/10**

For promoting an unlicensed indication for Versatis in the poster session of a third party medical society meeting, Grünenthal was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Reducing confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 3.2** - Promoting a medicine for an unlicensed indication.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.

**Grünenthal – Case AUTH/2332/7/10**

For making cost comparisons for Versatis which were incorrect and misleading and failing to declare that a named author on a poster was one of its employees, Grünenthal was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 2** - Reducing confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 7.2** - Making inaccurate and misleading cost comparisons.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.

**Napp – Case AUTH/2353/8/10**

For providing business class air travel to delegates it had sponsored to attend an international congress and failing to certify overseas travel arrangements, Napp 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 high standards.
- Clause 14.2** - Failing to certify overseas travel.
- Clause 19.1** - Providing excessive hospitality in the form of business class air travel.

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.

**ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry 2011**

Proposals to amend the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry were recently agreed by the ABPI following widespread consultation. The 2011 Code is now available to download from the PMCPA website [www.pmcpa.org.uk](http://www.pmcpa.org.uk).

The 2011 Code will come into effect on 1 January 2011 but with various transitional periods.

Some of the newly introduced requirements include pharmaceutical companies no longer being able to provide branded promotional aids to health professionals (Clause 18), increased transparency of payments to consultants (Clauses 20.2, 20.3) and increased transparency of sponsorship of attendance at meetings organised by third parties (Clause 19). Full details are given in the supplementary information to those clauses and from the PMCPA website.

Printed copies of the 2011 Code will be available from the PMCPA shortly.