

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 in which a company was ruled in breach of Clause 2 of the Code and required to issue a corrective statement is highlighted below.

Astellas Pharma Europe Ltd has breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

Astellas Europe – Case AUTH/2747/1/15

For organising a meeting which was not a genuine advisory board, and paying UK health professionals to attend that meeting where Xtandi (enzalutamide) was promoted for an unlicensed indication, Astellas Europe 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 12.1** - Disguised promotion.
- Clause 18.1** - Paying health professionals to attend a promotional meeting.
- Clause 20.1** - Organising an advisory board that did not meet the criteria.

The Appeal Board was concerned that UK health professionals had attended on the understanding that the meeting was an advisory board and had been paid to do so. This was unacceptable. The Appeal Board decided to require Astellas Europe to issue a corrective statement to all the UK attendees at the meeting.

The full case report was published in the PMCPA August Code of Practice Review and is available at www.pmcpa.org.uk as is the text of the corrective statement.

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 7th Floor, 105 Victoria St, London, SW1E 6QT** or complaints@pmcpa.org.uk.

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