

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.

Chiesi Ltd and Vifor Pharma UK Limited have each breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry. In addition Chiesi was also publicly reprimanded.

Chiesi – Case AUTH/2435/8/11

For promoting Fostair for an unlicensed indication and breaching a previous undertaking given in that regard, Chiesi was ruled in breach of the following clauses of the Code:

- Clause 1.8** - Failing to comply with all applicable codes, laws, and regulations.
- Clause 2** - Bringing discredit upon, and reducing confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.
- Clause 3.2** - Promoting a medicine for an unlicensed indication.
- Clause 9.1** - Failing to maintain high standards.
- Clause 25** - Failing to comply with an undertaking.

The Code of Practice Panel was concerned about the difficulty in obtaining the relevant information from Chiesi and the inconsistency of that information. The Panel reported Chiesi to the Code of Practice Appeal Board which decided to publicly reprimand Chiesi for its failure to provide complete and accurate information at the outset. It also required an audit of Chiesi's procedures.

Vifor Pharma UK Limited has breached the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon and reduced confidence in the pharmaceutical industry.

Vifor – Case AUTH/2529/9/12

As Vifor Global issued three advertisements which bore a claim similar to one which had previously been ruled in breach of the Code, Vifor in the UK was considered to have failed to comply with an undertaking and 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.

The full case reports were published in the PMCPA February Code of Practice Review and are 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 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.