

PRESCRIPTION MEDICINES CODE OF PRACTICE AUTHORITY

Merck Sharp & Dohme Limited has breached the Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry and brought discredit upon, and reduced confidence in, the pharmaceutical industry.

For entertaining health professionals and their spouses at a meeting with no clear educational content in an unsuitable venue, Merck Sharp & Dohme 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 19.1 - Providing inappropriate hospitality to health professionals (and their spouses) that was not secondary to the main purpose of the meeting in a venue that was not suitable for an educational/scientific meeting.

The full case report (Case AUTH/1827/4/06) was published in the PMCPA August Code of Practice Review and is 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 12 Whitehall, London SW1A 2DY, or complaints@pmcpa.org.uk.

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