



Dr Richard Chadwick
General Manager, Adjudication Branch
Australian Competition & Consumer Commission
By email: adjudication@accc.gov.au

Wednesday 30 July 2014

Dear Dr Chadwick,

Re: Re-authorisation of Edition 18 of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct

I write regarding the interested party consultation for the re-authorisation application of Edition 18 of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct (the Code). CHOICE strongly encourages the ACCC to refuse authorisation of the proposed Code on the grounds that it does not increase public benefit.

It is CHOICE's understanding that the ACCC limited the authorisation of Edition 17 of Medicines Australia Code to 2 years rather than 5 years in order to encourage Medicines Australia to improve transparency around payments to individual health care professionals. Improved transparency would address market-distorting payments that operate to the significant disadvantage of consumers in the health system.

The proposed Code encourages healthcare professionals to consent to disclosure, allowing them to opt-out of disclosure while retaining the financial and related benefits of their interactions with member companies. The voluntary nature of the proposed transparency measures result in a Code which offers no tangible increase in public benefit compared to Edition 17.

An additional concern is that consumers would have to search each Medicines Australia member company website to collate their own list of doctors who have consented to make information about benefits available. Consumers require a single website which consolidates information about payments and benefits.

CHOICE believes that it would be to the public detriment to authorise a Code that fails to deliver on the key principles agreed to by Medicines Australia Transparency Working Group. This includes the key outcome raised by many interested parties in deliberations about Edition 17 of the Code: transparency on individual payments made to healthcare professionals and the need to develop measures consistent with international requirements, including the U.S. Physicians Payment Sunshine Act.

For further information please contact CHOICE on

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "ER" followed by a long horizontal line.

Erin Turner,
Campaigns Manager

Unlocking the power of consumers

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