

## Factsheet – Code Committee

### Last Call! More stringent prohibition of gifts from 1 July 2015

Gifts have been banned in Switzerland as elsewhere since the middle of last year. So far the only exception to this rule has concerned items of modest value distributed on the occasion of events for which a longer transitional period was granted. **That period will expire shortly!**

Companies which have signed the Pharma Code and/or the Pharma Cooperation Code are only allowed to hand out items of modest value bearing the company logo on the occasion of events until the end of June 2015. With effect from **1 July 2015**, the rule in Switzerland as elsewhere will be that only writing implements and note pads of modest value may be handed out at events and shall no longer bear any logos<sup>1</sup>. Apart from a few further exceptions which are described in detail in the codes **no other gifts may be given.**

The prohibition of gifts is a further development of the rules of conduct of the pharmaceutical companies in relation to service providers in the healthcare sector. It is based on a deliberate decision taken by the EFPIA Board and the Code Secretariat is required to apply the prohibition of gifts stringently with a view to ensuring full compliance in this matter. Consequently, the Secretariat will not allow any exceptions extending beyond the provisions of the Codes and will issue **warnings to all companies which commit breaches.**

Various reports and notifications have already been made to the **Code Secretariat** in connection with non-compliance with the ban on gifts. These reports have been followed by **interventions**. In this sector too self-regulation has been found to be working and both the competition and the Code Secretariat are keeping an eye on possible infringements. Compliance with the rules banning gifts is recommended to avoid unnecessary administrative expenditure. In addition, a warning by the Secretariat can result in the destruction of entire stocks of advertising items.

**The Code Committee notes that compliance with the more stringent prohibition of gifts is still inadequate at this juncture and calls upon the companies to ensure strict implementation!**

#### CONCLUSION:

- ✓ The Secretariat interprets the ban on gifts stringently.
- ✓ Exceptions from the ban on gifts are described in detail in the Codes.
- ✓ Consistent warnings will be issued by the Code Secretariat in the event of breaches.
- ✓ The competition is always on the lookout, as is apparent from the reports received.
- ✓ Compliance is advisable and saves both time and money!

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<sup>1</sup> The relevant adjustments to the Codes will not be made until that date.