



Pharmaceutical Advertising Advisory Board
Conseil consultatif de publicité pharmaceutique

375 Kingston Rd., Suite 200, Pickering, Ontario L1V 1A3
Telephone: (905) 509-2275 Fax: (905) 509-2486 Internet: www.paab.ca



January 17, 2011

To: Dr. Joel Lexchin and Dr. Barbara Mintzes

Dear Dr. Joel Lexchin and Dr. Barbara Mintzes:

At your invitation I attended the meeting on November 29, 2010 titled "To Do No Harm".

Two statements were made that caused us major concern.

The first was made by one of the members of your project who had on a slide that PAAB was not "transparent". I took issue with this statement as it was not based on any fact. No one from PAAB had been interviewed for the study. In fact, the PAAB is transparent. Our newsletter, that is available to the public on the PAAB web-site www.paab.ca, displays all level 2 complaint decisions.

The second statement made by Dr. Joel Lexchin was that the PAAB code was "very weak". The PAAB Code of Advertising Acceptance is transparently available at www.paab.ca and is strongly supported by bona fide physicians, pharmacists, industry, publishers and patients groups. Health Canada supports the code and collaborates with the PAAB in its regulatory efforts. Being a transparent organization, we would be interested in understanding its weakness from your perspective. We believe that the self regulation preclearance review mechanism provided by the PAAB is amongst the best in the world and is evidenced by the PAAB track record which has made the Canadian marketplace very different from elsewhere in the world.

Since this was given to an international audience, we believe that some type of apology, first reviewed by our lawyer, should be sent to the audience. We await your response.

Sincerely,

Rossier, MD, CCFP, FCFP, MRCGP (UK), CAHS, OC

PAAB Chair

To provide a preclearance review that fosters trustworthy healthcare communications within the regulatory framework. Fournir un service d'évaluation des renseignements soumis en vue d'une approbation qui favorisera une communication fiable et crédible sur les produits de soins de santé, et ce à l'intérieur du cadre réglementaire.