



BRITISH GENERIC MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

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For immediate release

BBC Newsnight report on Gaviscon™

The BGMA today welcomed the BBC's Newsnight investigation into Gaviscon™.

BGMA Director, Warwick Smith, said:

"So called research based pharmaceutical companies should focus on researching new treatments that benefit patients, not on maximising their profits at the NHS's expense.

"The sort of evergreening alleged by the BBC in tonight's Newsnight programme can cost the NHS tens of millions of pounds with no patient benefit. New drugs get a long period of market monopoly in which to make a return on their investment in research. When that patent protection expires, generic versions of the medicine are launched at prices that can be 10% of the original drug. Generic competition makes the drugs bill affordable.

"If all medicines were priced at the average cost of branded drugs the NHS drugs bill would be £5bn higher. That wouldn't just make medicines unaffordable: it would make the NHS itself unsustainable. Delaying generic competition weakens the NHS, costs the taxpayer and undermines patient care."

NOTE TO EDITORS

The BGMA represents the interests of United Kingdom-based manufacturers and suppliers of generic medicines and promotes the development of the generic medicines industry in the United Kingdom.

The BGMA is made up of 18 members of the generic manufacturing industry, who between them account for around 85% of the UK market by volume.

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