



BRITISH GENERIC MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

Thursday 01 July 2010: For immediate release

BGMA welcomes EU General Court ruling that AstraZeneca abused its dominant position by preventing the marketing of generic omeprazole

Commenting on the EU General Court's ruling that AstraZeneca had acted anti-competitively to prevent or delay the launch of generic omeprazole, BGMA Director Warwick Smith said:

We very much welcome the Court's ruling. Its findings are consistent with those of the European Commission's inquiry into the pharmaceutical sector and our own experience that the research based pharmaceutical industry uses a tool kit of devices to prevent generic launch when the patents on its drugs expire. This costs the NHS many millions of pounds and diverts the research based industry from its true task of developing new medicines that patients need. So society pays more for less. We applaud the competition authorities for taking enforcement action against this sort of abuse and urge them to continue doing so.

--Ends--

Further information:

Warwick Smith: 020 7457 2065 / 07974 565 424

Notes for Editors:

The EU General Court's press release can be found here:

<http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2010-07/cp100067en.pdf>

The British Generic Manufacturers Association represents the interests of UK-based manufacturers and suppliers of generic medicines and promotes the development and understanding of the generic medicines industry in the United Kingdom.

Generic medicines contain the same active ingredient and are as effective as the equivalent brand and cost much less, making the NHS drugs bill affordable. 65% of all medicines dispensed by the NHS are generics yet they cost only 26% of the NHS drugs bill, a saving of around £8.6bn in England & Wales alone. Without generics, the NHS drugs bill would be approximately twice its current level. The average cost to the NHS of a generic medicine is £3.83, whilst the average cost of a branded medicine is £20. Competition from generics also stimulates the research based pharmaceutical industry to develop new medicines.

Our 19 members account for around 85% of the UK generics market by volume. Their work keeps medicines affordable for the Department of Health which allows further investment in other healthcare priorities, and promotes innovation in the development of new medicines.

We represent the views and interests of our members and industry to the UK government, the devolved administrations, regulators, other relevant third parties, including where appropriate the Institutions of the European Union.
