

22. DISEASE AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS (DACs)

Guidelines

Reference

Disease Awareness Campaigns (DACs)

A Disease Awareness Campaign is defined as information presented in a manner to educate and inform consumers on one or more types of diseases or medical conditions or treatments of such, for the purpose of raising public awareness and knowledge of such diseases, conditions or treatments.

Guidance on Disease Awareness Campaigns (DACs) – Extracts

DACs should not be constructed as indirect advertisements of Prescription Only Medicine (POM). Publication of a POM advertisement, whether directly or indirectly, in the form of a DAC, is an infringement of the law, and the person and publisher, who are found guilty, may be subjected to the punitive measures as prescribed in the law.

TABLE OF COMPARISON OF A BONA FIDE DISEASE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN (DAC) VS AN INDIRECT ADVERTISEMENT OF A PRESCRIPTION ONLY MEDICINE (POM)

The following table provides some distinguishing characteristics of a bone fide DAC from one that is intended to promote a medicinal product. The following information is not exhaustive and the industry is encouraged to exercise further discretion in their review process.

Disease Awareness Campaign (DAC)

- Primary purpose is to raise awareness of disease and to provide generic health educational information on disease and its management in a factual, fair, balanced and up-to-date manner
- Does not promote the use of a specific medicinal product, whether directly or indirectly
- Is not aimed at stimulating consumer's demand for a specific medicine or brands, whether directly or indirectly
- May make reference to the availability of treatment options (which may include medicines as part of a range of possible management options) but should not be of such a nature that an individual would be encouraged to approach a prescriber to request for a particular medicinal option
- Emphasis of information is on the disease condition and its recognition rather than the treatment option
- Where there is only one, or leading option of few medicinal treatments available to treat or diagnose the specific disease, or where a new medicinal product has just been released for the treatment or diagnosis of the disease state, adequate measures are taken to ensure that the campaigns focus on health and disease education, with details on where to get appropriate advice such as speaking to a healthcare professional

Indirect Advertisement of a POM

- Does not provide fair and balanced health educational information, particularly the treatment options in the management of disease. Some evidence of distortion of information to favor a product or treatment may be discovered
- Is intended to promote the use of a specific medicinal product, whether directly or indirectly, through use of text, pictures, signs, logos, etc
- Is aimed at stimulating consumer's demand for a specific medicine or brands, whether directly or indirectly
- Does not give comprehensive information on the available treatment options or make reference to available treatment options in such a manner that an individual would be encouraged to approach a prescriber to request for a particular medicinal option
- Emphasis of information is on the treatment options rather than the disease condition and its recognition
- Where there is the only one, or leading option of few medicinal treatments available to treat or diagnose the specified disease, or where a new medicinal product has just been released for the treatment or diagnosis of the disease state, NO adequate measures are taken to ensure that the campaigns focus on health and disease education

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