



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL III
INDUSTRY
Industrial affairs III: Consumer goods industries
Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics

PHARM 268

**48th PHARMACEUTICAL COMMITTEE
27. - 28. 9. 1999**

Subject : Publication of Medical Journals on the Internet

Summary:

According to the advertising Directive 92/28/EEC advertising of prescription-only medicinal products to the general public is forbidden, whilst advertising to health professionals may be permitted under certain conditions.

Professional Medical Journals regularly contain advertisements for prescription only medicines. This advertising in professional journals in print-form is generally accepted as admissible advertising to health professionals.

Concern has been raised by consumer groups about the recent position taken by a competent authority to allow the inclusion of advertisements for prescription only medicines in a professional medical journal posted on the internet.

According to the position of this competent authority, medical journals would be accessible to the general public in libraries and special bookshops anyhow. This has never been considered to be direct to consumer advertising. If the nature and contents of a website of a Medical Journal is clearly intended for health professionals, if individual advertisements are labelled as for health professionals only and if hyperlinks to other sites are restricted to those sites containing information only, than there would be no case for dealing with the internet publication of this Journal differently than with the print publication.

Action to be taken:

Discussion and exchange of views whether this position can be shared, taking into account aims and purposes of the advertising Directive (92/28/EEC)

