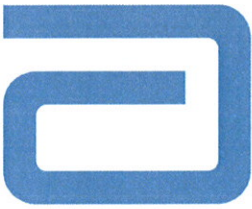


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16 April 2013

Secretary of the Senate
Legislation Committee
Parliament House
PO BOX 6100
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms. McDonald

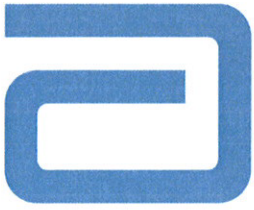
Re: Inquiry into the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Pharmaceutical Transparency) Bill 2013

Abbott Australasia Pty Ltd (Abbott) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Committee regarding the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Pharmaceutical Transparency) Bill 2013. Abbott supports the objectives of increasing transparency and safeguarding the interest of patients. We believe existing efforts to strengthen the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct make the Therapeutic Goods Amendment unnecessary and therefore, respectfully offer our opposition.

Abbott is committed to promoting and maintaining high standards of Ethics and Governance that are aligned with the philosophy and general principles of Medicines Australia's Code of Conduct. The new Code of Conduct (edition 17) raised the level of transparency of member companies' interactions with healthcare professionals to disclose aggregate payments to doctors and consumer groups. The Code of Conduct was authorised by the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) in 2012 after rigorous scrutiny and an extensive public consultation process, and represents an effective model of industry self-regulation that is aligned with the National Medicines Policy (NMP).

In an effort to further improve industry transparency, Medicines Australia created the Transparency Working Group (TWG). The TWG is engaging with a diverse group of stakeholders (including the AMA, CHOICE and CHF) to develop a model to provide greater transparency regarding the interactions between industry and healthcare professionals. The recommendations of the TWG will be incorporated into the revised edition of the Medicines Australia Code of Conduct (edition 18) and will address the transparency objective of the Therapeutic Goods Amendment Bill 2013.





Abbott endorses the comments submitted to the Committee by Medicines Australia regarding the Therapeutic Goods Amendment (Pharmaceutical Transparency) Bill 2013. Abbott believes Medicines Australia's plan is a more relevant and feasible approach to achieving the shared objective of increased transparency.

In summary, we believe the Therapeutic Goods Amendment Bill is unnecessary and respectfully offer our opposition.

Sincerely

/John Crothers
Abbott Affiliate Management Representative