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5 Grace Street,
HAMILTON, TAS. 7140

30th May, 2003.

The Secretary,
Select Committee on Medicare,
Suite 1.30,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Dear Sir,

Bearing in mind the high cost of medical care, I find it very hard to reconcile the discrepancies in prices between drugs issued by the major pharmaceuticals and the other brands.

A glaring case in point is Panadol, which is widely used and prescribed, being considered a "Safe" drug. Panadol as sold at the chemists is \$5.50 for fifty tablets; A generic brand consisting of exactly the same amount of paracetamol sells at a chemists for \$4.50 for one hundred tablets. I can supply receipts in proof of this.

No doctor will recommend the generic brands - and a very wide range of medications are so manufactured - but leave it to the chemist to point out to the customer that it is possible to obtain exactly the same article at a reduced price.

What I want to know is why the taxpayer is expected to swell the coffers of the large pharmaceutical companies. Wouldn't it be more sense to use the cheaper brands on prescriptions subsidised by the Government?

Yours faithfully,

Jean Hayes
(cho)