



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health**

Ref No. D14000351

Mr Geoff Kirkwood  
4 Belbrook Road  
UPWEY VIC 3518

Dear Mr Kirkwood

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 January 2014 to the Minister for Health and Minister for Sport, the Hon Peter Dutton MP and the Assistant Minister for Health, Senator the Hon Fiona Nash, regarding misconduct in the healthcare sector. As the Assistant Minister has responsibility for this matter, she has asked me to reply on her behalf.

The Government aims to ensure that decisions on management (including treatment) options for health needs are based on sound clinical evidence, not driven by incentives or other influences, and that the therapeutic goods industry's self-regulatory codes of conduct are effective in minimising the potential for any promotional activities to compromise the quality use of medicines.

The Department is supporting an industry-led implementation advisory group that is guiding work to strengthen self-regulation including through the design and development of shared communication systems and a common complaints mechanism.

As you indicate in your email, Medicines Australia is conducting a review of its code of conduct for the ethical marketing and promotion of prescription pharmaceutical products in Australia. In the review, Medicines Australia is consulting on a transparency model for the disclosure of payments by pharmaceutical companies to healthcare professionals. Medicines Australia indicates on its website <http://medicinesaustralia.com.au/> that it intends to submit its revised code of conduct to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission for reauthorisation by mid 2014.

Thank you for your interest in this important public health issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jenean Spencer'.

Jenean Spencer  
Assistant Secretary  
Safety, Quality and Research Branch  
6 February 2014