



February 2, 2016

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
United States House of Representatives
Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Washington, DC

Re: Price Increase in CaEDTA and other Valeant Pharmaceuticals Products

Dear Congressman Cummings,

On behalf of the physicians, pharmacists, and nurses who provide emergency care through our nation's fifty-five poison control centers, the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) would like to voice our significant public health concern brought on by the actions of Valeant Pharmaceuticals.

As you already know, Valeant Pharmaceuticals has recently been under scrutiny for its astronomical pharmaceutical product cost increases. The company's strategy of purchasing the rights to existing pharmaceuticals, only to aggressively raise their cost prices, has left patients with the inability to afford continued therapy, with higher co-payments, and with the inability for health care practitioners and hospitals to afford to stock these drugs.

We are greatly concerned as potentially life-saving antidotes and other medications used to stabilize and treat poisonings have become inaccessible due to their extreme costs to hospital pharmacies, propagated by the business model used by Valeant Pharmaceuticals. Calcium Disodium Edetate (also known as CaEDTA or Calcium EDTA), pytonadione (Mephyton), and penicillamine (Cuprimine) are included on the World Health Organization's 19th Model List of Essential Medications. Though rarely utilized, it is crucial for hospitals that offer emergency services to stock these antidotes in case of a poisoning emergency.

Since Valeant Pharmaceuticals has acquired manufacturing rights, many hospital pharmacies can no longer afford to keep these essential medications on the shelves and patients on long-term therapy cannot afford to continue their treatment.

For example, the Wholesale Acquisition Cost of CaEDTA, an antidote used for severe lead poisoning, rose from \$464.24 per package (manufactured by Graceway Pharmaceuticals) in 2008 to \$26,927.33 (manufactured by Valeant Pharmaceuticals) in 2015. Valeant Pharmaceuticals owns the sole manufacturing rights to CaEDTA, leaving hospitals without an alternative product to consider.

Another example is the price of one phytonadione tablet, used to reverse the effects of 'blood thinners' like warfarin, which rose from \$9.37 to \$58.76 in 2014.

A third example is Penicillamine, an antidote for severe copper, lead, and mercury poisoning, which now costs about \$260 per tablet when manufactured by Valeant Pharmaceuticals, but is sold for \$1 per tablet by various foreign manufacturers.

In the interest of public health, we encourage significant discussion of, and investigation into, the practices of Valeant Pharmaceuticals to ensure essential and potentially life-saving medications are available for use in our patients.

Sincerely,



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