Gilead’s Insatiable Greed

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For four years in a row Gilead has been the winner of Big Pharma’s annual “Golden Greed Award” as well as already being the winner of the “Most Profitable Medication In the History of Humanity Award”.

Over the past five years Gilead has been averaging over US$12 billion of profit per annum from its Sofosbuvir based drugs. That’s profits after costs on Sovaldi, Harvoni and Epclusa.

Not content with making these mind-blowing profits Gilead has a cunning plan to continue to reap these vast profits for years to come by using and abusing patent laws to block access to cheaper generic Hepatitis C treatments in both developed and developing countries; regardless of the cost in human suffering and loss of life.

Gilead uses a fraction of its vast profits to buy the loyalty of doctors, medical academics and government health officials. (Some might call this bribery and corruption… others might call it buying influence.)

Simultaneously Gilead uses its vast power to crush its competitors in the courts.

Yesterday the European Union Patent Office upheld Gilead’s patent rights to Sofosbuvir in Europe. This complex decision is the result of Gilead throwing huge amounts of money at lawyers and patent specialists to find a loop hole that would allow it to retain the patents on Sofosbuvir even though Sofosbuvir itself appears to be unpatentable. Gilead was able to retain the patent on Sofosbuvir by patenting a pharmaceutically-inactive component of Sofosbuvir that appears during the synthesis of Sofosbuvir. The result is that Gilead’s monopoly still blocks to access more affordable generic versions of Sofosbuvir based Hepatitis C medications in Europe.

Click here to read the rest of Greg’s blog, and find out about green fielding: what Gilead and Monsanto have in common. Also find out what Gaelle Krikorian, the head of Policy in the MSF Access Campaign had to say about the European Court’s decision to grant Gilead’s patent o Sofosbuvir.