Hepatitis C Treatment and Why I Educate about Generics

July 15, 2015 By Greg Jefferys

15th July 2015

Most nights now I spend an hour or two answering emails from folk. Sometimes this is a very joyful experience when I hear from people telling me how much better they are feeling after a three or four weeks of treatment, like this one:

Hi Greg

Literally just off the jet from Asia where my wife and I had a wonderful holiday up country at a beach resort.

To say I am feeling new is an understatement.

Compared to the old regime many years ago this one is nothing and the results are as you say. Increased energy -skin clearing up ...

Of course I read that and it is a real lift. Of course there are the sad cases too, like this:

Hi Greg:

Thank you for your fast response , I'm adding in this email to my brother and sister. Let me explain some facts about our case:

*-My mom got Hep C during my birth 43 years ago because a blood transfusion undetected until 15 years ago. She is fighting with cirrhosis and consequent Hepatocellular carcinoma. She lives in ****** (a country in South America), We are all from ******** but I live in Spain as I said. The drug is not available there....even here in Barcelona.*

-Our country has huge political and economical problems including exchange control (we cannot exchange our local currency to $ because government regulations) so we are doing our best to get the money in order to buy this drug.

*-Sofosbuvir could be shipped to ********* with no problem (in this case we have no regulation in our country with personal use drugs)*

-We have no problem to get a prescription from our Doctor in our country (We already got it)

This is very sad, a family trying to save their beloved mother who contracted Hep C through no fault of her own. In a country where there is no hope at all of getting government assistance and only the very wealthy could ever afford Gilead's Sovaldi. Yet even with this type of email I feel that at least there is hope and that because of the Indian generic drugs there is a chance that this loving mother can be saved.

Then last night, the last email I received before going to bed hit me like a bolt out of the blue. It was so far out of the left field that it took me a long time to process it. I will share it with you, tell me what you think?

Buying Generics

Hi Greg, I am concerned that the attention you are generating is going to result in a reaction from Gilliard (sic) that is going to make it more difficult for those that are or will be relying on a generic option. I cannot be sure why you are so actively promoting the Indian generics, but the timing is not so good. Most

of us are waiting on Harvoni, and your active forward promotions are making any idea of being able to get large quantities of people sneaking in under the spotlight rather moot. Accessing affordable meds from India has been happening for quite some time. I would say large scale for the last decade. I have been watching this particular (HCV) space for years. Now it appears to be getting very close, just hope nobody fucks it up. There is no way I can know what is in the existing contract between Gilliard and the Indian manufactures, but there is a good chance it precludes them from selling to countries such as the one I live in. Sooner or later the contracts will expire and need renegotiating. There will be many more for many different drugs, and it is possible that this exposure will result in future contractual changes that winds up effecting people not abundantly wealthy, such as you and I. I cannot see an upside from highlighting purchases of generics from India. The scale of the HCV problem is such that there was never going to be any hiding of the activity. It does not need any promotion. I hope it is not made very difficult before we even get started. Thanks ####,
I thought about this guy's comments quite a bit. Why am I promoting Indian generics? Why am I putting the spotlight on that option?
Hi ####
Firstly I understand your concerns however Gilead is well ahead of all of us in this game of trying to restrict access to Indian generics. They have a well defined containment policy and strictly limit which countries their licensed Indian manufacturers can sell in to.

However the crux of the matter is that neither India nor China recognised Gilead's patent on Sofosbuvir. This means that anyone can manufacture Sofosbuvir in both India and China and sell it to whoever they want.

To try to contain this, Gilead has entered into these licensing agreements with some Indian companies in exchange for manufacturing technology and a royalty. However there are plenty of Indian pharmaceutical companies who have not done a deal with Gilead and are or will manufacture Sof in India for local and export consumption. Gilead can not stop that. Soon China, within months, will come on line as well.

One strategy Big Pharma has for slowing the flow of generics has been to spread fear campaigns about the risks of generics and make people too scared to buy them. My campaign is to ensure that all people know about how affordable and effective generic Sofosbuvir is and how good many of India's pharmaceutical companies are. I hope the same will soon apply to generic Harvoni.

All people, not just a small clique in the know, should know that these news drugs are available and affordable. Everyone everywhere who has Hep C should know that there is a cheap effective cure available. That is why I am promoting and shining the spotlight on Indian generics; that is the upside of highlighting Indian generics, to ensure that everyone knows that they are there and available.

Good luck with your generic Harvoni when it comes through, I'm glad you already know about it, a lot of people do not.
best wishes
Greg
Of course I did not get to sleep for a while thinking about this email, wondering about my motives and motivation. Wondering what I was doing that was making this guy so angry. I know how many people do not know about the Indian options and I know how many people need to know… millions and millions of people need to know and when they do know I will stop blogging and spend my time fishing or hiking through the mountains, far away from computers and blog and emails. But until that day comes I will

keep trying to bring attention to this issue and that gross unfairness that millions of people are suffering ill health and death when a simple cheap cure is available to them and the only thing preventing them having access to that cure is greed.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/hepatitis-c-treatmen-7-1