The Italian Job: Good News

June 1, 2016 By Greg Jefferys

Over the last year the Hepatitis C situation in Italy has been one of absurd frustration for Italian Hep C patients. Whilst the Italian Health System is under funded and struggling to provide for Italians with Hepatitis C the Italian Customs officials have been seizing generic Hepatitis C medications like generic Harvoni and Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir purchased by Italians from India.
The reason that Italian Customs gives for refusing to allow Italians to access affordable treatment, thereby saving the Italian Health System tens of millions of Euros, is that Harvoni, Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir are all medicines that are available in Italy.

However in Italy the law does allow for Italian citizens to return to Italy with 12 weeks supply of generic Hep C meds.

So I have been helping Italians fly to India and buy their meds there and then return home. But of course not everyone can afford that extra cost. Also a lot of people with Hep C are too ill to fly to India.
In this case if they have relatives or friends in the UK then they have the option of flying there, residing there, and getting there medicines sent there. This works okay in the current EU and UK regulations. However not everyone can do this either.
So a lot of Italians have been in the tragic situation of knowing that the cure for their Hep C is there but their government is stopping them accessing it.

That has now changed.

A loop hole in Italian rules for importing medicines for personal use has been found.

As mentioned above Italian Customs currently prevents the importation of generic Hepatitis C drugs like Harvoni and Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir BECAUSE THEY ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE IN ITALY.
However a new generic Hep C drug combination called Darvoni is now readily available and there is no equivelant available in Italy therefor it can be imported if you have an Italian doctor's prescription.

What is Darvoni?
Davroni is generic Sofosbuvir and generic Daclatasvir combined in the same tablet.
This was the orginal brainchild of Dr James Freeman, world reknowned pioneer of generic Hep C medicines.
He suggested the construction of this pill to the Bangladesh based pharmaceutical manufacturer Beacon Industries last year when he realised that the combination of Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir was as effective, or more effective, than Harvoni across all genotypes of Hepatitis C.
The other advantage of the Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir is that Daclatasvir is a much easier and cheaper drug to manufacture than Ledipasvir.

Beacon Industries reacted swftly to the challenge of creating this new Hep C medicine and when they were thinking about what to call the new drug combination Dr Freeman half jokingly suggested “ Darvoni ”.
So Darvoni it was and Darvoni is are now in full production.
True to Dr Freeman’s prediction Darvoni is significantly cheaper than any other generic Hep C drug on the market with a 12 week treatment costing less than US$1,000 including shipment costs.

Also Dr Freeman’s recently trials using generic Hepatitis C treatments showed two things:
1. That the Sofosbuvir + Daclatasvir treatment is as effective or more effective than Harvoni and works across all Hep C genotypes, something that Harvoni does not do.
2. That a single tablet combining these two drugs is significantly cheaper to produce than generic Harvoni or buying Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir in separate tablets.

Why have Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir not been combine in on pill before?
Sofosbuvir is made by Gilead and Daclatasvir is made by Bristol Myer Squib. These two giant, international pharmaceutical companies are rivals and like warring dictators they would not reach a compromise even if it helped them both and the people with Hep C.

This kind of production can only occur in a country like Bangladesh that is not a signatory to the international patent agreements.

How Reliable is Darvoni and Beacon Industries?
Beacon Industries is a long established manufacturer of generic pharmaceuticals. Its main market is Asia and Africa. Beacon imports the Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir APIs from Chinaand compounds them and makes them into tablets. Their factory is very modern and their administration and manufacturing teams are highly trained.
As mentioned previously Dr Freeman has had Darvoni tested in one of Australia’s leading chemical testing laboratories and also monitored it use in patients. The quality and effectivness of Darvoni has been found to be to be of the highest standard.

So now Italians and people from other countries around the world have access to an effective and affordable new generic treatment for Hep C... Darvoni

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