



## **PRACTICE NOTICE 5**

### **Advertising and Promotion of Medicinal Products on the basis of price or quantity discounts**

The statutory mandatory Code of Conduct for pharmacists supports the rational and proper use of medicinal products in the interest of the health, wellbeing, care and safety of the patient. The Code requires that pharmacists provide honest, relevant, accurate, current and appropriate information to patients regarding the nature, cost, value and benefit of medicinal products, health related products and services that they provide. The provision of information focusing on cost impacts on the essential impartial understanding of the medicinal needs of the patient (including safety in use) particularly in the mind of the patient or his/her carer(s).

Medicinal products are not ordinary market commodities; they are, with certain limited exceptions, regulated products that may not be supplied without the benefit of the expert advice of a pharmacist in respect of their safe, appropriate and responsible use. This position is supported by the various regulatory requirements including those specified in the Regulation of Retail Pharmacy Businesses Regulations, 2008 (*S.I. No. 488 of 2008*) where certain obligations are laid down in respect of the circumstances in which the sale or supply of non-prescription medicinal products to the public by or under the personal supervision of a pharmacist, is carried on in retail pharmacy businesses.

Pharmacists must discharge their professional obligations to patients seeking advice, guidance and assistance in respect of their pharmaceutical care and treatment. Self-selection of medicinal products without the provision of appropriate supervision, professional support, advice and information by the pharmacist is not appropriate. Supervising and superintendent pharmacists are reminded of their particular responsibilities to ensure that policies and procedures in place comply with these requirements.

In summary, therefore, the position is that neither the regulatory provisions, nor the professional codes in place, permit or support the advertising or promotion of medicinal products to the public on the basis of price or quantity discounts.