

The Verdict is In... PAAB Code Training is a **Big Success**

By Mark Gregory

After an extensive evaluation of the winter series of Pharmaceutical Advertising Advisory Board (PAAB) Code workshops, it is fair to say that the PAAB and Pharmahorizons Inc. team hit a homerun. Participants were enthusiastic about the value of the workshop and their day's experience. The January and March series involved over 200 pharmaceutical marketers from Montreal and Toronto.

"It's the best workshop I have attended in a long time," said Aldona Armstrong, a Product Manager with Biogen Idec, after taking part in the Toronto event in January.

Ray Chepesiuk, the Commissioner of PAAB, was delighted at the positive response to the PAAB initiative. He explained the goal of the training program this way, "We want to teach the application of the PAAB Code to new pharmaceutical industry employees and suppliers, and refresh the knowledge of seasoned professionals."

Chepesiuk also explained that the workshop, which will be held annually in the spring and fall, contains several elements, including workshop pre-work, face-to-face training with the Commissioner and PAAB reviewers, and Internet e-learning resources. Registration is open to anybody having an interest in the regulation of pharmaceutical advertising.



PAAB Commissioner Ray Chepesiuk with two workshop participants.



PAAB Assistant Commissioner Yin Man with workshop participant.

PAAB Training



A group of workshop participants.

What did the workshops consist of?

The workshops ran a full day. They featured three interesting and challenging real-life scenarios that participants worked on in small groups.

“The workshop cases were stimulating and interactive,” said Marilyn Sinclair, President of WordCheck Inc.

“The workshops are designed to cover a lot of ground in one day. Participants are encouraged to complete the pre-work and read the Code over several times before the event to best take part in the large and small group work and to keep up with the brisk pace of the event,” said Steve Gregory, President of Pharmahorizons Inc. and workshop co-facilitator.

Pharma marketers especially appreciated the role of the PAAB staff as workshop facilitators.

“I found the workshop covered most of the issues we usually encounter,” said Ghislain Gautier, an Account Director with Taxi, a large Montreal agency specializing in pharma marketing. “The workshop was on time and well-managed, and the presence of Ray and his team was great!”

The event included a networking opportunity after the formal session. The Commissioner and a number of PAAB reviewers talked with participants and fielded one-on-one questions about the Code and its application.

After a formal evaluation of the workshop, organizers opted to make a few small adjustments to

make the event even better. But they won't tamper with what many see as an excellent learning opportunity.

“Comprehensive topics...it is hard to see how you could improve this full, one-day program,” said Hubert Czerwinski, Director of Sales and Government Affairs at Teva Neuroscience Canada

A partnership that works

The PAAB selected Pharmahorizons Inc. as its professional development partner to provide logistic, instructional design, and marketing support for the workshops. Pharmahorizons was selected because of its extensive training experience in pharma and its communications channels (via its Web site at www.pharmahorizons.com and widely distributed industry newsletter, *LifeTrack*).

More on the PAAB Code

The scope of the PAAB Code of Advertising Acceptance currently includes advertising of prescription and over-the-counter products to health professionals in all media. PAAB also provides advisory comments on direct-to-consumer materials for prescription drugs. The Code is easy to access and download online at www.paab.ca.

If your job involves pharmaceutical marketing, register now for the fall PAAB series planned for October 12 in Dorval, Quebec and October 14 in Toronto, Ontario. For a registration form, go to: www.pharmahorizons.com/PAAB-Registration-Form2.asp, or e-mail mark@pharmahorizons.com.

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