



PGEU PRESS RELEASE: Counterfeit PGEU Approval of Illegal Internet Pharmacy exposes Difficulties of Internet Pharmacy Certification

Brussels, 21 May 2010 - On the 19 May 2010 PGEU was informed that a website selling medicines online – The Canadian Neighbor Pharmacy: <http://www.cancarepharmacy.com/>, a site registered in Russia, was claiming that PGEU supported the website and that “*all drugs sold [...] are considered to be approved by PGEU*”. The website also claims that four other certifying bodies for pharmacy based in North America had approved the website.

By clicking on the PGEU logo at the bottom of the page, any potential customer would be redirected to a certificate “issued” by PGEU, with a fake signature of the PGEU President, Mr Filip Babylon.

In its report¹ on the Falsified Medicine Directive, the European Parliament ENVI Committee has called for a community logo to be placed on legitimate internet pharmacy sites.

PGEU believes however that the ease with which certification can itself be counterfeited exposes the limitations of such systems and shows that if they are to be implemented they need to be extremely robust.

PGEU Secretary General Mr John Chave said “*Of course it is absolutely important that patients who wish to buy medicines legally on the internet are given safe options to do so. However our experience shows that we run the risk of creating a false sense of security if counterfeiting certification is so easy. We should not put patients in the position of having to discriminate between fake and real certification. We need to explore technological options which put certification beyond the counterfeiters*”.

As from yesterday the website has been removed from the Internet.

END

Information for Editors

The Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU) is the European association representing community pharmacists. PGEU's members are the national associations and professional bodies of pharmacists in 30 European countries, including EU Member States, EEA members and EU applicant countries.

For more information, please visit the PGEU website: www.pgeu.eu

or contact: Giovanni Mancarella, PGEU Communications and Policy Officer (Tel. +32 2 238 08 18).

¹ (COM(2008)0668 – C6-0513/2008 – 2008/0261(COD))