DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville MD 20857

JUN 23 1997

Transmitted Via Facsimile

Dave Garbe
Director, Scientific Information and Medical Compliance
Allergan, Inc.
2525 Dupont Drive
PO Box 19534
Irvine, CA 92713-9534

RE: **NDA 19-921**
Ocuflox (ofloxacin) Ophthalmic Solution 0.3%
MACMIS ID# 5402

Dear Mr. Garbe:

This letter responds to Allergan Pharmaceuticals, Inc.'s (Allergan) letter dated June 10, 1997, to the Division of Drug Marketing, Advertising, and Communications (DDMAC) concerning promotional materials for Ocuflox. In its letter, DDMAC identified promotional materials disseminated by Allergan that DDMAC determined promoted Ocuflox (ofloxacin) Ophthalmic Solution 0.3% in violation of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, and its implementing regulations.

DDMAC raised issues with Allergan's promotional materials including a "Dear Doctor" letter dated April 9, 1997, and signed by one of its territory managers and a sales aid, both distributed by Allergan. In these materials, Allergan compared the antibacterial activity of Ocuflox to competitive products based on *in vitro* data. Allergan stated or suggested that this information had clinical significance and that Ocuflox was more active. In Allergan's response, it argued that, in several instances, the materials state that the data cited are *in vitro* data. It also argued that DDMAC was focused on certain terms and phrases, and ignored the context in which the statements appeared. Allergan's remarks have been carefully considered, however, they are not persuasive.

First, as Allergan noted, it is important to consider the context in which these promotional claims were presented. The promotional materials in question were prepared and disseminated by Allergan to promote the sale and use of its prescription drug product, Ocuflox. This product is an antibiotic eye drop indicated for use in the treatment of a limited number of specific infections of the eye. These promotional materials were prepared and disseminated to persuade health care providers to use Ocuflox in the clinical treatment of infections of the eye.

Second, Allergan argues that "it is perfectly acceptable to cite *in vitro* data as long as there is no clinical implications associated with the claims." However, in this instance, the messages in the promotional materials, in their entirety, were clearly intended to suggest clinical benefit and the clinical use of Ocuflox. For example, the first paragraph of the Dear Doctor letter states:

> There seems to be a renewed interest in the importance of susceptibility rates versus MIC (minimum inhibitory concentration) values in the treatment of bacterial ocular infections. When a drug is applied directly to the site of infection rather than dosed systemically, MIC measurements become less relevant. This is because the tear concentration of the drug when first applied to the eye can be up to 1,000 times higher than when dosed systemically. *Therefore, the important question becomes "Is the bug susceptible to the drug?"* (Underlining added for emphasis).

The opening sentence of this paragraph specifically alleges that this information is important in the treatment of bacterial ocular infections. The next two sentences further demonstrate that Allergan intended for this information to have clinical implications by discussing an alleged method of determining clinical activity and tear concentration, and concluding that the "important question" for clinical use is the in *vitro* information.

Third, the sales aid describes the same data as the Dear Doctor letter. In the context of the sales aid as a whole, it also connects the data on susceptibility rates to clinical use by describing tear concentration and penetration into the cornea.

As previously stated, Allergan's remarks are not persuasive and its promotional materials remain violative for reasons set forth in DDMAC's May 30, 1997 letter. DDMAC has serious concerns about Allergan's decision to not discontinue the dissemination of these violative materials. Please respond on or before the close of business, June 26, 1997, stating whether Allergan has changed its position regarding the discontinuation of these materials and any other materials with similar claims.

If you have any questions, please contact me by telephone at (301) 827-2831, by facsimile at (301) 594-6771, or by written communication at the Division of Drug Marketing, Advertising and Communications, HFD-40, Rm. 17B-20; 5600 Fishers Lane; Rockville, MD 20857.

In all future correspondence regarding this matter, please refer to MACMIS number 5402 and NDA 19-921. DDMAC reminds Allergan that only written communications are considered official.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Abrams for

Warren F. Rumble
Regulatory Review Officer
Division of Drug Marketing,
Advertising and Communications