



**Anthony P. Zook**

President and Chief Executive Officer

March 10, 2008

**Via Electronic Transmission**

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley:

I write in response to your letter of February 26, 2008 inquiring as to the steps AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals LP (AstraZeneca) is taking to enhance the transparency of certain financial relationships with medical organizations.

Patient health is a core value at AstraZeneca, and we recognize that transparency regarding many aspects of our business is an integral part of that value. Throughout the last year, in conjunction with an effort to update our external web site, [www.astrazeneca-US.com](http://www.astrazeneca-US.com), we re-evaluated the information it provided and committed to enhancing transparency in certain key areas.

Most pertinent to your letter, the initiative will include greater transparency with respect to our medical education grants. Beginning in August 2008, AstraZeneca will post on our web site the names of the institutions to which we provide grants (e.g., academic institutions, health care professional associations, hospitals and medical education companies), as well as the grant amount, and the purpose for which the grant was made. We believe that this step will also serve to educate external audiences regarding the positive contributions these programs have towards enhancing medical knowledge.

AstraZeneca is proud to support independent, bona fide continuing medical education programs. We view these programs as having an important role to play in enhancing the practice of medicine, and they are an integral part of our commitment to patient health. At the same time, AstraZeneca understands that these programs must be independent of inappropriate influence and control. To that end, we have comprehensive policies which govern our funding of independent continuing medical education programs to ensure adherence to FDA guidance, the PhRMA Code, and the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) standards. A separate group within the company, known as the Medical Education Grants Office (MEGO), maintains responsibility for grant making and ensuring that our policies are followed in this area.

Our transparency commitments go beyond publicly disclosing information regarding our medical education grants. Over the course of 2008, information regarding our contributions to nonprofit organizations, political action committee contributions, and post-marketing safety commitments will be available for the first time on the company's web site. In addition, we have worked to make information regarding certain policy positions, clinical trials and our compliance program more accessible with an enhanced web site, which was launched in late February. AstraZeneca views transparency as a dynamic process, and we will continue to evaluate areas for enhanced transparency to make sure that we are fully meeting our commitments.

We understand and appreciate your interest, and the interest of others, in making more transparent relationships between those in the medical community, including relationships with biopharmaceutical companies. AstraZeneca is committed to providing patients and healthcare professionals with relevant information that enables physicians to make the best treatment decisions. We are also aware of your proposed legislation, the Physician Payments Sunshine Act. We believe, however, that legislative proposals must ensure that the information provided is relevant, accurate, and provided in a manner that is clearly understandable to those viewing it. Moreover, the scope of such legislation must not be so onerous and burdensome that it is unfeasible to implement its requirements effectively; for example, federal legislation must preempt state laws that have been enacted or are pending relative to payments to physicians for speaker programs, advisory boards, consulting fees, honoraria and related travel expenses. As these issues are considered by Congress in the legislative process, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss the balancing of these goals.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this information regarding the ways in which we are enhancing our transparency. If you are in need of additional information, you may contact Richard E. Buckley, Vice President, Federal Government Affairs (202-350-5574; [richard.buckley@astrazeneca.com](mailto:richard.buckley@astrazeneca.com)) or me (302-885-1604; [tony.zook@astrazeneca.com](mailto:tony.zook@astrazeneca.com).)

Sincerely,



Tony Zook