Reviewer’s report

Title: A Review Of The Differences And Similarities Between Generic Drugs And Their Originator Counterparts, Including Economic Benefits Associated With Usage Of Generic Medicines, Using Ireland As A Case Study.

Version: 2 Date: 5 October 2012

Reviewer: Atholl Johnston

Reviewer’s report:

Much improved manuscript.

However in the response to the comment “Therapeutic agents where generic substitution is not supported by medical opinion not discussed” was not adequate.

While this aspect of the manuscript has been expanded it has not really dealt with the issue of where drugs should be prescribed by brand to ensure the continued efficacy and safety of treatment. For example the British National Formulary recommends brand prescribing for several drugs and drug classes – modified release diltiazem (BNF63, p 132), ciclosporin (BNF 63, p583). The Danish Government has banned generic substitution for ciclosporin and tacrolimus -
and elsewhere in Ireland the Health and Social Care Board of Northern Ireland have issued and extensive list drugs “Unsuitable for Generic Prescribing” -
http://www.nhssb.n-i.nhs.uk/prescribing/documents/Regional%20List%20Generic%20Exceptions.pdf

A Further discussion on where the “cost savings” go would be useful – see Curr Med Res Opin. 2007 Jan;23(1):105-16. Do generics offer significant savings to the UK National Health Service? Kanavos P.

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

As previously stated