

Client Alert

An EU Logo for Safer Online Shopping for Medicines

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As of July 1, 2015, all internet sites that sell medicines to the public in the EU Member States (plus Norway, Iceland, and Lichtenstein) have to display a common logo established by the EU Commission.

The common logo allows the general public to easily and quickly verify that an online seller is a legal registered pharmacy or retailer by clicking on the logo, which redirects the shopper to the registration listings on the official website of the governing authorities of the EU Member States. This registration and verification process is intended to diminish the risk that consumers will purchase fraudulent or fake medicines online.

Origin of the common logo

To reduce the threat to public health and safety associated with the online sale of fraudulent and fake medicines, the EU Commission introduced the concept of a common logo that would be recognizable throughout the EU and would identify legal, registered online pharmacies and retailers in Directive 2011/62/EU of June 8, 2011. That Directive amended Directive 2001/83/EC, which addresses medicinal products for human use and prevents the entry into commerce of falsified medicinal products (the "Falsified Medicines Directive").

In Implementing Regulation 699/2014 of June 24, 2014 (Implementing Regulation), the EU Commission used the power granted by the Falsified Medicines Directive to i) develop and adopt a new common logo for identifying persons authorized to sell medicines online, and ii) to specify the technical, electronic, and cryptographic requirements to verify the authenticity of that common logo.

The Implementing Regulation granted Member States approximately one year to introduce the common logo into their national legislation.

This transition period ended on June 30, 2015. As of July 1, 2015, the EU common logo must appear on every website page that offers medicines for sale to the public in the EU, including every page of third-party websites that offer a marketplace for online sales of medicines.

Look and feel of the common logo

As shown in the example for Belgium, below, the left-hand side of the EU common logo is the national flag of the EU Member State where the online supplier is established. Next to the flag, the phrase "Click to verify if the website is operating legally" appears in the language of the EU Member State where the online supplier is established and links to the official registration page for online pharmacies and retailers who have been authorized to sell medicines by the national governing authority. In addition, the Implementing Regulation

requires the EU common logo to be static, to have a minimum width of 90 pixels, and to use specific reference colors.

For Belgium the common logo will look as follows:



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