

PP 004 – Big Pharma Mylan Rant – J. Austen + A. Hamilton

BIG PHARMA has been responsible for incredible life-saving drugs and cures and the vast majority of the professionals in Big Pharma people are dedicated, selfless individuals working for the common good. That said, exploding drug costs coupled with huge BIG PHARMA profits, fueled by direct consumer marketing and venture capital money, is indefensible. While health insurance companies and hospital systems can also be awful (and we'll rant about them later), drug costs are rising more than any other segment of our healthcare industry and their profits also outstrip the rest of healthcare. All while Big Pharma often enjoys the fruits of tax payer funded NIH research. We also admit that WE are part of the problem – yes, we are hypocrites – for taking free samples and savings cards and mostly for the free lunches of pizza and cookies in our offices (we then sadly rationalize about it)

05:15 Martin Shkreli, the Lord Valemort of Pharma, is an easy target for our first PP rant, but his products do not affect our pediatric patients much. So, the winner of our first Podcast Pediatricians rant is **Mylan Pharmaceuticals and its CEO Heather Bresch**, owners of EpiPen, the branded epinephrine autoinjector that treats life threatening allergic reactions in children. EpiPen is a device they did not invent and they do not even manufacture. Follow this excruciatingly long saga of Mylan greed, incestuous anti-competitive behavior, political nepotism, and incredible price gouging for a device that in 2016 contains about a dollar's worth of meds, which Mylan buys from an outside manufacturer for under 35 bucks.

Okay, you might say, Mylan and was a bit greedy and took advantage of market forces and the incompetence of their rivals. OH, but it gets worse, way worse.

19:50 The Republic of Palau

Remember, Palau is for the Palauans, but they love to share their country with eco-friendly Americans!

21:30 Mylan Part 2

Mylan is the gift that keeps on giving, Oct 2016 Mylan reached a settlement of \$465 million dollars with the Justice Department for short changing Medicaid on EpiPen. In last 5 years Mylan had the second highest executive compensation package in the pharma industry, 292 million for its top 5 managers (led by Heather Bresch), staggering for a relatively small pharma player that never developed a new drug and with only one branded drug – EpiPen. Mylan is also one of the leading exploiters of tax inversion. They bought a small company in the Netherlands and in 2014 they incorporated there. In Oct 2016, a class action lawsuit was filed in October over the Mylan EpiPen price increases. In mid-December 2016 20 states filed civil complaints against Mylan and Teva pharmaceuticals for a brazen price fixing schemes for their generic drugs.

Mylan is now trying to add EpiPen to the coveted list of preventative services of the United States Preventative Services Task Force to ensure that Medicaid and Medicare would have to pick up the entire cost of their near monopoly drug, removing any modicum of a price check. Ridiculous!

25:40 A RANT without any suggestions for how pediatric caregivers and parents can do something is just like spitting of the wind. OR throwing up on a spinning carnival ride on a windy day – been there, done that.

We pediatric caregivers should start prescribing the GENERIC epinephrine auto-injectors. CVS is now offering the generic Adrenaclick epi autoinjector for \$109.99 for a two pack – by far the lowest price on the market. HOO YAH!! OK Walgreens and Rite Aid and Duane Reed and yes, you too Jewel Osco in Chicagoland, step up and meet the CVS challenge! Hopefully, savvy parents will be open to generic epinephrine and so far, they have been, but if they want EpiPen we will certainly prescribe it. Mylan is talking about launching a half priced

generic version with better savings cards that may be attractive to families, but for all the reasons in this little rant, DO YOU REALLY WANT TO SUPPORT MYLAN?

Actions have consequences. Attention must be paid!!

We should modify our state pharmacy substitution laws so that pharmacists can freely substitute generic epinephrine auto injectors unless it is specified brand medically necessary by the doctor, physician assistant or nurse practitioner.

We agree with recent bipartisan legislation that speeding up up FDA approval of new prescription drugs and medical devices. We also need to speed up FDA approval of generics and to reform the drug patent laws so drug companies cannot just make small changes to keep extending their patents over and over or pay other companies to delay generics. Allow Medicare to negotiate on behalf of its 40 million beneficiaries and, for goodness sake, let us buy drugs from Canada. US consumers are being screwed

30:55 Jane Austen Alexander Hamilton Scoop for April 1st

Lin-Manuel Miranda is writing a follow-up musical to his transcendent ground breaking Hamilton. It is tentatively titled AND Peggy!!

Based on letters uncovered by Ron Chernow in Newburgh NY that details the long close personal relationship between Jane Austin and Angelica Schuyler Church, who first met in London in 1796 and kept up a faithful letter correspondence until Angelica's death in 1814.

The HUGE bombshell - Jane Austin's book, Pride and Prejudice, published in 1813, is based on the romance between Eliza Schuyler and Alexander Hamilton

The BIGGER bombshell? – you should listen to the podcast!

40:00 Pearls and Faux Pas

Stitch Cutters, Familial Telangiectasia and Anemia

END 46:04

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Jane Austen – Hamilton: sources withheld by request – April 1st

