



For Immediate Release – Dec. 21, 2007  
Contact: Jean Silver-Isenstadt, MD, PhD  
Tel: 703-254-8972  
e-mail: jean@npalliance.org

## Physicians Support Chairman Dingell's Request for Overdue Data From Drug Companies

Reston, VA – The National Physicians Alliance (NPA) strongly supports Representative John Dingell, Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, in his request to obtain information regarding long-overdue data from the ENHANCE trial from Merck and Schering-Plough. The ENHANCE trial, completed in April 2006, is the first trial that examines the effect of ezetimibe (trade name: Zetia) on atherosclerotic plaque, an important marker of heart disease.

Despite the completion of the trial over 1.5 years ago, the data has yet to be released. Further, Merck and Schering-Plough announced plans (subsequently retracted) to change the study's primary endpoints. The companies refused to disclose who served on the expert panel that recommended this unusual change. In a recent development, it has been revealed that multiple studies on ezetimibe have not been released.

"We are concerned that the data on this trial have yet to be released. It is critical that clinicians and patients have all available data at their disposal when making important treatment decisions," said Dr. Lydia Vaias, President of the NPA. "This delay in the release of information also disregards those who participated in the trial. They deserve to know the results of the research project in which they volunteered, as do all patients and clinicians."

Due in part to a widespread marketing campaign, ezetimibe and Vytorin (a combination of ezetimibe and simvastatin) have become widely used medications with expected proceeds of \$5 billion in the coming year.

### References:

Chairman Dingell's letter:

[http://energycommerce.house.gov/Press\\_110/110-ltr.121107.ScheringMerck.ltr.pdf](http://energycommerce.house.gov/Press_110/110-ltr.121107.ScheringMerck.ltr.pdf)

New York Times Articles:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/21/business/21drug.html?pagewanted=2&\\_r=1&ref=health](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/21/business/21drug.html?pagewanted=2&_r=1&ref=health)

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/12/business/12zetia.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/12/business/12zetia.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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United across medical specialties, the National Physicians Alliance seeks to restore physicians' primary emphasis on the core values of our profession: service, integrity, and advocacy. We work to improve health and well being, and to ensure equitable, affordable, high quality health care for all people.

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