

ORAL QUESTION H-0825/02
for Question Time at the part-session in December 2002
pursuant to Rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure
by Mary Banotti
to the Commission

Subject: Abuse of EU research legislation covering orphan drugs

In 1999 EU legislation was adopted with a view to encouraging research into the development of 'orphan' drugs for the treatment of rare diseases. It would now seem that unscrupulous drug companies are using the legislation to obtain exclusive rights to common medicines which are currently used in the treatment of rare disorders, therefore pushing up the cost of such drugs.

Will the Commission undertake to inquire into the level of such abuse, and what measures will the Commission take to end such abuse and to ensure that the legislation is used for the purpose that it was intended, namely research for effective treatment of rare disorders?

Tabled: 03.12.2002
en