

## Sophie Hibburd

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**From:** Peter Barry  
**Sent:** Saturday, 14 September 2013 11:37 AM  
**To:** Sophie Hibburd  
**Subject:** Starter Packs

Dear Sirs,

I would be most dismayed as a practicing GP to have my access to starter packs restricted. These form an important means of saving the patient paying unnecessary money for a medication that may cause unacceptable side effects. So long as an information sheet is included in the sample pack there is not safety compromise as the doctor is ultimately responsible for the medication given to the patient and is the person most likely to be aware of other medications that patient may be on that might interact with the medication distributed.

I find that it is very handy to be able to provide a free starter supply of certain medications, particularly PPIs, anti-hypertensives and anti-depressants. The first I will often use for a short course to assess the effect and the others to save unnecessary expense for the patient as so often they will need to try several medications before finding one that suits. The cost of these drugs on a regular script is not inconsiderable and this may act as a deterrent to evaluating different drugs in a patient who often has little money and is not disposed to use the needed medication in the first place. In most cases a clinical trial is the only way of finding a medication that is not only needed but effective and acceptable to the patient.

Sometimes political correctness becomes blind stupidity. My only reason to want access to samples is for pure clinical reasons: for the benefit of my patients. There is no value to me other than enhancing my role as a supportive physician and helper of those who come to me seeking my help and advice.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Barry BSc MBBS MRCP (UK)