Only a minority of patients likely to benefit. In the YI trial, only 14 of the 48 patients completed the trial with a 50% reduction in seizure frequency. In the trial including 252 patients, the study population was not stratified according to failure of a previous treatment, undermining the strength of evidence provided by the results. In the non comparative trial in 170 patients with "refractory" epilepsy, only 12 patients found topiramate monotherapy satisfactory. Topiramate therefore appears to have a positive risk-benefit balance in only a minority of patients.

Marketing authorisation can be granted regardless of the number of patients likely to benefit. Also, French Transparency Commission opinions do not take into account the size of the target population when estimating the 'added therapeutic value'. In the present case, the Commission concluded that the 'added therapeutic value' was moderate. For our part, we concluded that topiramate offers an advantage.

In short, Thierry Moreau Defarges' detailed letter in no way challenges our conclusions.

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ABOUT PRESCRIRE

Association Mieux Prescrire

Association Mieux Prescrire (AMP) is the owner and administrator of *la revue Prescrire* and *Prescrire International*.

La revue Prescrire, AMP's most visible activity, is not a typical publishing company. It was launched by health care professionals in the late 1970s, in response to a lack of reliable, independent continuing education tools in France. They chose to opt for a not-for-profit framework for the association.

Article 1 of the AMP statutes (available from www.prescrire.org) states the objectives of the Association, namely to provide continuing multidisciplinary education, and to distribute by all appropriate means evidence-based medical and pharmaceutical information as a decision aid for health care professionals.

La revue Prescrire was not created with the aim of enriching individuals or a financial group. It is simply a means of meeting needs expressed by health care professionals. All its resources are devoted to improving and extending its methods and services. *La revue Prescrire* is resolutely "not-for-profit'.

AMP's main policy is decided by the General Assembly comprising the four membership groups. The four groups total 70 members: the Group of Founders, the Permanent Council, the Editors Group, and the Readers Group. The 20 members of the Readers Group are elected by readers belonging to AMP support membership.

The 20-member board of directors is elected by the General Assembly. The Executive Committee, composed of six members from the board of directors, manages AMP's business; readers are always represented.

Beyond its mission to distribute the latest developments to health care professionals in the form of systematic reviews, *Association Mieux Prescrire* also seeks to promote a number of core values, such as independence, ethical care, placing the patient at the centre of the decision-making process and health care systems. The Association extends a warm welcome to all those with ideas and projects aiming to improve health care.

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