

***Statement of Principles from the US COPD Coalition in Response to Philip Morris International's Acquisition of Respiratory Health Companies***



The US COPD Coalition (USCC) and many of our respective public health, medical, and patient advocacy organizations have, for years, opposed the manufacture, advertising, and marketing of all tobacco products. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our longstanding positions in this regard.

Philip Morris International (PMI), the second largest tobacco company in the world,<sup>1</sup> and the owner of 6 of the top 15 international cigarette brands in 2018, including Marlboro, the bestselling cigarette in the world, recently acquired several respiratory health companies, including Vectura, PLC. Vectura develops and manufactures inhalers that many other pharmaceutical companies utilize to deliver their medications, and those inhalers are widely used by people with asthma, COPD, and other lung diseases.

Many of our organizations actively opposed PMI's acquisition of Vectura. However, our efforts failed to stop the acquisition with the horrifying result being that we now have a corporation producing products that cause a wide variety of lung diseases and disorders, while one of its subsidiaries manufactures products to treat these same disorders.

Providers and their patients have the right to be fully informed about the tobacco industry's ownership of healthcare companies. While the PMI purchase of Vectura is unwelcomed, it does not

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<sup>1</sup> Statista, [Largest tobacco companies worldwide in 2020, based on net sales](#), Statista.com, June 3, 2021, accessed September 2021.

change the fundamental principle that physicians must act in the best interests of the patients, including prescribing the most effective medication for the patient's health condition.

USCC remains 100% committed to our position against the use and marketing of addictive and harmful tobacco and nicotine products associated with the death of millions of people worldwide from many diseases including lung cancer and COPD. As a result, we do not, and will not, support, or take financial support from, any tobacco company, or subsidiaries.

**The US COPD Coalition therefore commits to the following key principles:**

- I. **We Will Not Do Business with Big Tobacco:** USCC will not interact with individuals or companies directly involved with the tobacco industry or its subsidiaries.
- II. **We Will Not Accept Tobacco Money or Partnerships:** USCC will continue to refuse financial support and partnerships from tobacco companies and their subsidiaries.
- III. **We Will Oppose Big Tobacco in Health Care:** USCC will continue to oppose efforts by Big Tobacco companies to enter the health care sector while still producing addictive tobacco/nicotine products.
- IV. **We Will Help Patients Find Treatments That Work Best for Them:** Patients, in consultation with their healthcare provider, should choose drugs best suited to treat their health condition. As always, providers should recommend the treatment(s) best suited to treat the patient's health condition. Patients who object to using products that include components manufactured by a tobacco company subsidiary should be guided to alternatives.
- V. **We Will Urge The Pharmaceutical Industry to Develop a Tobacco Company-Free Supply Chain:** Pharmaceutical companies that use components made by subsidiaries of

tobacco companies should work to expeditiously develop supply chains that do not include those Big Tobacco-produced components.

VI. **We Will Increase Awareness:** USCC will educate, advocate, and create awareness about Big Tobacco's efforts to enter the health care sector, and which health companies are owned by, being considered for purchase by, or use products that are produced by subsidiaries of, tobacco companies.

VII. **We Will Put Patients First:** And above all else, USCC will ensure that everything we do reflects our mutual goal of putting patients first.