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Carole Lebrun

- My name is Carole Lebrun. I work in Packaging in the French subsidiary in Regulatory Affairs. I have been working for the group for 23 years and have been in Packaging for the last 10.

Packaging is a key link between the laboratory and patients. It is the best way of communicating with patients.

Regulatory Affairs:

- In my opinion, Regulatory Affairs means providing the right information, thereby guaranteeing proper use of drugs and safeguarding patients' best interests.

I believe that it is vital nowadays to help patients use their drugs properly. We must be constantly aware of any potential misuse, as it can have disastrous consequences both for the patient and the company.

It is therefore a matter of using appropriate packaging and trying to find alternatives to leaflets that are hard to fold and no longer fit in the box, and are written in very small, illegible print...

My job:

- My job, among other things, is to supply plants both within and outside the group – by which I mean subcontractors or external plants – with the electronic files they need to produce leaflets, boxes, foils, labels...anything, in fact, involved in packaging the drug. Then, there is the marketing side, particularly as part of product launches and interfacing with the supply chain.

We work with them on all aspects of implementation, implementation scheduling and deliveries. Lastly, Regulatory Affairs approves packaging materials that are due to be forwarded to production.

Often during initial launches, there is pressure to provide packaging materials to sites within very tight deadlines, due to impending launch dates. And it is true that you get a sense of satisfaction when the product appears on the market on launch day.

Qualities:

- You have to be extremely thorough. You also need to be organized and ask yourself questions, put yourself in the patient's position and ask yourself, "Do I really understand this information; is it clear?" You should also consider the pharmacist's point of view. The same applies to healthcare staff... we add diagrams for use in the leaflets – are these diagrams helpful?

You have to ask yourself all these questions and put yourself in other people's positions to see whether the packaging materials really provide the right answers. Fortunately, we have validation systems in place and there are a number of us on hand to review the process prior to materials being circulated to production sites; however, a fresh eye is always welcome.

What i like about my work:

- What I like is having a link with patients, a link to the outside world.

Indeed, we are all faced at one time or another with taking a medicinal product, whether it is for our own use or for our children. So obviously it's being able to say to yourself, "Oh, I've done a good job on that!"

When it's set out, when it's properly labelled and there are no unanswered questions – that's something I really like.

Carole Lebrun is someone who likes to be serious about her work without taking herself too seriously!