

**Most Pharmaceutical Companies Receive Poor Grades on HIV/AIDS Drug Development Innovation, According to AIDS Treatment Activist Coalition Report Card**

*Many Companies Get Low Marks in Five Benchmark Treatment Categories;  
 New Drugs Need to Reflect Long-Term Care Strategy*

**NEW YORK, N.Y. - (September 10, 2009)** – With the estimated 1.2 million people with HIV/AIDS in the United States expected to live close to a normal life span, the majority of pharmaceutical companies are not developing innovative, new long-term treatment options that offer improved efficacy, safety and tolerability when taken for decades, according to a [report card](#) on the pharmaceutical industry released today by the AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition’s (ATAC) Drug Development Committee. [ATAC](#), [www.atac-usa.org](http://www.atac-usa.org), is a national non-profit AIDS advocacy group working to end the AIDS epidemic by advancing research of HIV/AIDS.

The ATAC Pharmaceutical Company HIV/AIDS Report Card ranks the nine largest pharmaceutical companies (Abbott Laboratories, Boehringer Ingelheim, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Gilead Sciences, GlaxoSmithKline, Hoffman La Roche, Merck & Co., Pfizer and Tibotec) with HIV/AIDS drugs on the market in five categories: drug development portfolio and plans, access to drugs, pricing, community relations and marketing practices. The average final grade was a C-: Abbott Laboratories received the lowest grade, an F, and Merck & Co. and Tibotec each received the highest grade, a B. The companies were issued a letter grade from A-F for each of the five categories as well as a final grade average.

Category	Abbott Laboratories	Boehringer Ingelheim	Bristol-Myers Squibb	Gilead Sciences	GlaxoSmithKline	Merck & Co.	Pfizer	Roche	Tibotec
Company Grade	<b>F</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>B</b>
Drug Development Portfolio	D-	D+	C	B-	D+	B+	C+	D+	B+
Access	D	C-	C+	C+	B-	C+	C	D-	B
Pricing	F	D-	D+	C+	D	B	C+	D-	B
Community Relations	F	D	D	B-	D+	B-	B-	D+	B+
Marketing Practices	F	C-	D+	C+	D-	B-	C+	D	B-

“Even the best of the current HIV drugs weren’t designed and priced to be taken safely for as long as most people with HIV will need them,” said Bob Huff, a member of ATAC’s Board of Directors and its Drug Development Committee. “People with HIV, especially those who have run out of treatment options, need new alternatives for the long run, and pharmaceutical companies need to work closely with the community to help get there.”

“HIV drug development is changing. We’re seeing big companies pulling out of HIV altogether, others merging, and an increasing number depending on small biotech firms for the next innovation. The near-term pipeline is looking pretty dry and what comes after that is uncertain,” continued Huff.

ATAC gave most companies low marks in five benchmark treatment categories:

- **Drug Development and Plans**: The pipeline is shrinking, investment is falling, and in some cases, cooperation with the community has been diminishing. This adds up to fewer truly innovative new drugs and the possibility that clinical trials could be less safe or less likely to get relevant information.
- **Access to Treatment**: With fewer drugs in the pipeline that will be useful for people who have already used existing treatments, early access to potentially life-saving treatment is a growing concern.
- **Pricing**: HIV/AIDS drugs are among the most highly priced on the market, and price increases taken by most companies have been at least double the rate of inflation. This means fewer low income people can be accepted into government programs, and most people with HIV are paying higher insurance co-payments.
- **Community Relations**: Many companies are less willing to seek independent input from the U.S. HIV/AIDS community regarding research and trials, particularly in the early stages of the drug development process. This is putting trial participants at a greater risk for illness and treatment failure.
- **Marketing Practices**: Negative or misleading advertising has serious consequences for people with HIV/AIDS; potentially causing alarm if they are taking competing drugs, or stoppage of a current regimen before consulting with their provider. Some companies have sometimes overstated efficacy, safety, or are marketing drugs for non-approved uses.

“Compounding all of these issues is the consolidation of the pharmaceutical industry, an emphasis on other larger markets such as baby boomer blockbuster drug development, and the high cost of accessing and paying for drugs, all of which are breaking an already fragile HIV/AIDS treatment system,” said Lynda Dee, a member of ATAC’s Drug Development Committee.

“The report’s findings show that some pharmaceutical companies are clearly doing a much better job than others,” continued Dee “and the common denominator among those companies who consistently score higher is their willingness to partner with the HIV advocacy community early on in the course of drug development, as well as implementing its recommendations. The aim of the report card project is to ultimately lay out a clear course of action for companies to take in their HIV/AIDS drug development efforts, which would be a win not only for the companies, but for consumers as well.”

The ATAC Pharmaceutical Company HIV/AIDS Report Card makes several recommendations for how the industry can improve. These include the development of new safe and effective drugs, particularly for those who have run out of treatment options, consultations with the AIDS community earlier in the drug development process, and wider access to more affordable drug treatments. For a full list of ATAC’s recommendations, view <http://www.atac-usa.org/report-card-recommendations.html>.

ATAC, which receives funding from the pharmaceutical industry, completed its independent review in June 2009. The information in the HIV/AIDS Report Card was gathered from interviews with pharmaceutical companies and data taken from publicly-available sources. Each company was assigned an ATAC representative who led the data collection and reporting for that company. All voting ATAC Drug Development Committee members then suggested a grade for each company, in each of the five areas, all of which were averaged.

To view the full report card, executive summary, criteria for scoring, and backgrounder with current statistics on the state of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, visit <http://www.atac-usa.org/atac-pharmaceutical-report-card.html>.

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### **About the AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC)**

The AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC) is a national non-profit AIDS advocacy group working to end the AIDS epidemic by advancing research of HIV/AIDS. The organization brings together people with HIV/AIDS, government, industry and academia in matters affecting research, treatment and access. ATAC receives support from the pharmaceutical industry, on which it reports, and private donors. For more information, visit [www.atac-usa.org](http://www.atac-usa.org).

#### **Media Contact:**

Kim Novino  
Bridgeman Communications  
P: (617) 742-7270  
E: [kim@bridgeman.com](mailto:kim@bridgeman.com)