

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

IN RE: ZANTAC (RANITIDINE)
PRODUCTS LIABILITY
LITIGATION

MDL NO. 2924
20-MD-2924

JUDGE ROBIN L. ROSENBERG
MAGISTRATE JUDGE BRUCE E. REINHART

THIS DOCUMENT RELATES TO: ALL CASES

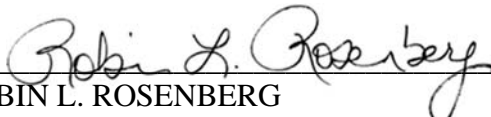
PRETRIAL ORDER # 14
Order Authorizing Continuation of Work by Interim Teams

This matter comes before the Court *sua sponte*. In Pretrial Order #9, this Court indicated that it was cancelling its Initial Conference and interviews of plaintiffs' leadership candidates in light the ongoing developments with the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus). The Court also noted in that Order that, while it would endeavor to reschedule the Initial Conference and leadership presentations at a time when all prospective participants can attend in person, in light of the fact that the Court cannot predict the duration of time that the coronavirus situation may continue, the Court may have to reschedule the conference and presentations at a time and in a manner that provides for attendance by alternative means, such as videoconferencing. The Court further directed appointed counsel to provide guidance as to the work that could feasibly be performed through May 1, 2020, that would best serve this MDL in the interim period. As the Court continues to monitor the health crisis and act in accordance with national, local and court directives and guidance, the Court is not in a position currently to give any greater specificity as to when and how the conference and interviews will occur. But the parties should be assured that the Court is working diligently to ensure that, at the soonest feasible time, the Court will give clear direction to the parties on these and all other matters governing this case.

This Court is keenly aware of the delicate nature of balancing the interests in moving this case forward, while also ensuring that it has full information in making any decisions relating to the case, including but not limited to the important determination of permanent leadership. Until such time as permanent leadership is put in place, the Court finds that pursuant to its broad case management authority, particularly in MDL actions, it is in the best interests of the case to allow the Initial Census Team, Practices and Procedures Team and Interim Defense Leadership Team to continue their work and so authorizes them to do so, while conferring with other counsel to ensure that all views are considered while progressing with the important matters at hand. The Court depends on counsel now more than ever to work together to advance the interests of the case, even when there may be differing views as to how such progress should occur. Due to the unavoidable need to reschedule the conference and interviews, the Court was unable to meet counsel in person, discuss an agenda and hear from the leadership applicants. In lieu of that conference, the Court must now trust that counsel can act in concert with one another and consistent with what direction the Court gives through its written orders.

The Court also reminds all counsel in this proceeding of the obligation to be familiar with the local rules of this Court, including but not limited to Rule 7.7, which prohibits the filing of letters to the court unless invited by the Court.

DONE and ORDERED in Chambers, West Palm Beach, Florida, this 20th day of March, 2020.



ROBIN L. ROSENBERG
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE