



Maine Pharmacy Association Capsule

February 2007

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"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere." - Theodore Roosevelt

Upcoming Events:

MPA/PGNE Spring Convention & Trade Show

April 13-15, 2007
The Hilton Garden Hotel

Freeport, ME



Message from the President

A Busy Time for the Association

Larry Lamie, RPh

2006 has been a very busy and rewarding time for all of us on the Executive Board.

We were invited by State officials to meet with "first responders" such as Hospital, Medical and Emergency agencies to assess Maine readiness to cope with state wide medical emergencies. Lisa Martin, MPA board member, returned from the meeting seeing the need to have more people that are able to give inoculations during such crisis. MPA is looking at expanding the scope of practice for Pharmacist who are willing to take an APhA course and become certified. This may help Pharmacists in rural areas to reach out to patients that are unable to obtain injections for flu or pneumonia because of the distance to the nearest clinic.

We are still working with the Maine Benzodiazepine Study Group's proposal to the Environmental Protection Agency for safe disposal of unused drugs. The group had proposed a 25 cent fee collected of all prescriptions to fund the project. MPA Boards members voted not to support if the fee was included in their proposal. The fee was removed and members of this group will be speaking at our MPA & PGNE trade show this April.

I was invited to meet with founding dean John Cormier of the New England College in Portland on the prospect of having a Pharmacy School in Maine. He has accepted our invitation to speak at our Spring Convention about what is needed to bring a Pharmacy School to Maine.

It has been exciting year for our state association and as our membership continues to grow, we thank you. We ask you to be involved and are always invited to attend our Board meeting which meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Merchants Association in Augusta. If you would like to contribute your input, contact any one of us on the Executive Board. We are here to be your voice.



From the Coordinator's Desk

Christopher R. Gauthier, RPh

Spring has sprung! Well, at least in my head it has! I have got cabin fever big time. I look forward to the simple things like going out to walk my dog and still feeling all my digits when I come back inside. I think winter is tough on everyone in Maine, regardless of your background. We all tend to huddle indoors and wait for it to be over. Unfortunately, we can sometimes feel like we are on an island by ourselves. The same thing happens in our careers as well. We spend so much energy just trying to make it through the day, that we forget that there are others in our profession with the same struggles that we have. Like a Mainer in the winter, we isolate ourselves and try to face the overwhelming task of surviving in our careers by ourselves. I want to remind you that you are not alone. I also want you to know that there is a cure for cabin fever quickly approaching where you can gather with your colleagues and fight the good fight together. The 2007 MPA/PGNE Spring Convention and Trade Show promises to be one of our best. We have a brand new venue in Freeport (yes ladies, I said Freeport; as in the place with all the shopping!) with a host of timely topics and the chance to commiserate with people just like you that are looking for a way to do more than just simply get by in their careers. We have some great entertainment as well with dinner, dancing, and even a hypnotist at our banquet. So, get out and live it up! Look in this newsletter for a full list of speakers and go to www.mparx.com to register and book your hotel room. Discounted room rates expire on March 12th, so don't miss out! I can't think of a better way to whip cabin fever and forge lasting relationships with your colleagues, not to mention getting 13 hours of CE before summer! I hope to see everyone there!

Spring Convention Schedule Announced

MPA and PGNE proud of Speaker Offerings

Friday, April 13th

8:30am - 4pm Registration & Welcome

8:30am - 10am Exhibitor's Continental Breakfast

9 - 10:30am: Medicare Part D 2007 - Adele Pientrantoni, R.Ph. - Continuing Education: 1.5 CEs – Sponsor: CMS

10:30am Break: Exhibitors / Refreshments

11am - Noon: National Pharmacy Legislation - Chris Nave - Continuing Education: 1CE - Sponsor: National Community Pharmacists Association

Noon: Lunch w/Exhibitors

1:00 -2:00pm: Pharmacy Technician Roundtable - Larry Lamie - Technicians Role in Pharmacist Support - Continuing Education: 1 CE - Sponsor: Maine Pharmacy Association / PGNE

2 pm Break: Exhibitors / Refreshments:

2:30 -3:30pm: Fraud, Waste, & Abuse (FWA) Guidelines – Mark Polli, RPh - Continuing Education: 1 CE - Sponsor: Hannaford Bros.

_____Open Evening_____

Saturday, April 14th

7:30am - 4pm Registration & Welcome

7:30am- 9am Exhibitor's Continental Breakfast

8am- 1pm Exhibits Open

8:00 – 9:00 am: Suboxone/ Subutex Therapy - Mike Angelini, Pharm.D., BCPP - Continuing Education: 1 CE – Sponsor: Reckitt Brenckiser Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

9:00 – 10:00 am: New Maine Pharmacy School!!! - John F. Cormier, M.S., Pharm.D. – Continuing Education: 1 CE – Sponsor: University of New England School of Pharmacy

10am Break: Exhibitors / Refreshments

10:30 - 11:30am: Prescription Drug Returns /Destruction - Len Kaye - Continuing Education: 1 CE - Sponsor: University of Maine Center on Aging

11:30am - MPA Business Meeting (everyone is welcome!)

Noon: Lunch w/Exhibitors

1 - 2:30pm: How to Handle a Pharmacy Audit - Michael Tocco, R.Ph., M.Ed. - Continuing Education: 1.5 CEs - Sponsor: Pharmaceutical Strategies, LLC

2:30 -3:30pm - Electronic Prescribing - Dev Culver - Continuing Education: 1 CE - Sponsor: HealthInfonet

Saturday Evening Festivities!

6pm Cocktail/Social Hour - 7pm Gala MPA Banquet - 8pm Hypnotist - 9pm Awards, Prizes & Raffle!! – 9:30-11pm Music & Dancing

Sunday, April 15th

8:30 - 10am Continental Breakfast

9 - 10am Women's Health - Kristina Ward, PharmD, BCPS – Continuing Education: 1 CE – Sponsor: University of Rhode Island College of Pharmacy

10 – 12noon Clandestine Labs - Ralph Bridges, Special Agent, Maine DEA - Continuing Education: 2 CEs – Sponsor: Maine Drug Enforcement Agency

Register now at www.mparx.com!



Community is Key to Health Literacy

Low health literacy in the United States can interfere with good health care, the Society for Women's Health Research says. **Patients are expected to take a more active role in their own health care at the doctor's office, the drug store and at home, and good communication skills are important.** Health Literacy Consulting, an organization that promotes effective health communication, offers reasons people have trouble understanding medical information - literacy, age, physical or mental disability, language barriers, culture and emotion. **Overcoming low health literacy could be as simple as using a 1-10 scale for pain, asking questions until a doctor's comments or directions are understood or keeping a personal health record that can be brought to the office or hospital.**

5 Critical Issues and Trends in 2007

Looking forward into 2007, businesses will have to find ways to adjust to a changing market as shoppers become more capable of gathering and interpreting information instantly and more mindful of health and wellness. Industry expert Phil Lempert of Supermarket Guru identifies 5 things retailers should know:

The first baby boomers turn 65 in 2010. As people move into their next phase of life, with a reduced reliance on Social Security and dwindling returns on their investments and housing, a new active semi-retired population, 78 million strong, is about to change the dynamics of the way American businesses operate.

The consumer becomes the commander. With a touch of a button, shoppers can compare features and prices along with accessing the latest

research and consumer blogs and then instantaneously purchase the product. The way we buy everything will change.

America's health and wellness report card shows a failing grade. With a population across all ages and races that continues to increase its waistline, its cancer rates, its incidence of heart disease and diabetes - the wellness and longevity of relationships with customers and employees is at risk. What are the existing opportunities for companies to provide solutions to America's number one impending crisis?

Advertising to the masses is over. More age diversity, more ethnic diversity, more economic diversity and more media choices are spreading marketing and advertising dollars too thin to be effective.

"America the Green." Consumers are shifting their investment dollars and purchases to those retailers and companies who are environmentally responsible. Businesses will have to become green or they will start to wilt

Seeking Health Online

On a typical day some 10 million Americans now turn to the web for health information - about as many as those who pay bills online, read blogs or look up a phone number or address, according to an August 2006 survey of Internet users by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Most information seekers start by using a search engine and are looking for information on behalf of someone other than themselves. **Women (82%) are more likely than men (77%) to seek health-related information online.** More frequent seekers include those with a college degree, more experienced internet users and those with broadband connections.

Respondents described their search for health information online in a positive way:

- **74% of health seekers said they felt reassured that they could make appropriate health care decisions.**
- 56% said they felt confident to raise new questions or concerns about a health issue with their doctor.
- 56% said they felt relieved or comforted by the information they found online.
- 51% said they felt eager to share their new health or medical knowledge with others.
- Just 15% of respondents said they "always" check the source of the health information online. **85 million Americans gather health advice online without consistently examining the quality indicators of the information they find.**

Gen Y Most Influential For Retailers

A new National Retail Federation (NRF) study says that Generation Y – the 82 million people born between 1982 and 1990 - “is the most influential generation for retailers because it is bigger than the baby boomers and its members have spending power and strong opinions at an earlier age.”

The NRF research also shows that Gen Y is a group that is not interested in the “mushy middle” when it comes to merchandise or retail experiences – they are interested in acquiring products that are either elite or cheap – and not anything in between. Furthermore, Gen Y is seen as a group interested in instant gratification, willing to wait just three seconds for a web page to download before getting impatient and moving onto another site, and able to process information five times faster than their elders. In addition, a new study by Forrester Research reports that Gen Y spends 12.2 hours online each week, 28% longer than Gen X and nearly twice as long as Boomers.

Good News for E-mail

3 in 4 online adults value e-mail from companies they frequently patronize, according to a study by Harris Interactive. Ninety-four percent of online adults have received an e-mail solicitation, with 30% going on to purchase a good or service after receiving an e-mail.

A separate study from Responsys found that relevant e-mail campaigns increased net profits 18 times more than broadcast mailings. The report, “The State of Personalization,” noted that 44% of marketers already personalize some aspect of e-mail campaigns and 89% plan to increase their use of personalization in future efforts.

The Harris Interactive report also found it essential to tailor the message to match the recipient. Sixty-one percent of those surveyed identified timing of the e-mail as an important factor in their desire to respond. Sixty percent reported that compelling offers and discounts were an important factor, and 55% reported that e-mail targeted to their specific interests, lifestyle or preference was important to them.

Online News Bytes

- Online advertising is expected to reach \$19.5 billion in 2007 (17.5% greater than growth in total US ad spending) and \$23.8 billion in 2008, according to eMarketer.com.
- By 2008, nearly 30% of in-store retail purchases will first be researched online, predicts Jupiter Media in their “Market Forecast: US Retail 2004 – 2008”.
- E-mail advertising accounted for 26.033 billion advertising impressions, with retail goods & services accounting for 11.765 billion advertising impressions in November 2006, according to Nielsen//NetRatings.

- More than 207 Million Americans, or 69.3% of the United States population are now Internet users, according to Nielsen//NetRatings' August 2006 report.
- Internet advertising spending increased in first three-quarters of 2006 by 49.2%, more than the nearest 3 outlets combined (Spanish Language-TV – 16.6%, National Newspapers – 8.4%, and Spot TV Top 100 Markets – 7.4%), according to Nielsen Media Research.
- 95 million American adults, or 8 in 10 Internet users, look for health information online, and more than half (51%) specifically look for information on diet, nutrition, vitamins or nutritional supplements, according to Pew Internet & American Life Project.
- Multi-channel shoppers helped generate about \$125 billion in offline sales in 2005 alone and spent up to 50% more than single-channel shoppers, according to Forrester Research.

E-Coupon Users vs. Offline Coupon Clippers

E-coupon clippers shop online and talk more with peers and are therefore a valuable target for brand marketers, concludes a new report, "E-coupons engage customers beyond discounts," from Forrester Research. E-coupon users don't fit the profile of a typical coupon clipper. They search for, find more and redeem more coupons. **E-coupon users have higher household incomes (\$72,000 compared to \$60,000) and a greater interest in trying new products if they can do so while saving money.**

While they use a variety of sources, including offline sources, e-coupon users do collect coupons from e-mail promotions. **Thirty percent of e-coupon users redeemed at least 16 coupons in the past quarter, compared with 20% of offline coupon clippers.** While they are more price-conscious and more likely to purchase private label products, e-coupon users should remain a key target for marketers due to their high level of curiosity about new products and greater influence over the opinions of their peers. The report suggests, "To effectively tap into the value of e-coupon users, brand marketers must treat e-coupons as part of customer conversations, rather than as drivers to ad hoc transactions."

Online Market Research Showing Rapid Global Growth

For the third year in a row, Internet-based market research, once viewed with skepticism by some in the pharmaceutical industry, is the world's number one method of data collection for quantitative physician studies. The 2006 Medfield Pharmaceutical Market Research Trends Study found that **43% of all quantitative market research globally, and 75% in US, is conducted online.** In Europe, the level of online pharmaceutical research has jumped 27% in the last year alone. The study cites convenience and accessibility as major reasons for conducting research online. Physicians' increased access to the Internet means it is possible for researchers to capture feedback from a

broader cross-section of physicians, located in different regions and reflecting different professional backgrounds and practices. Those surveyed cited various reasons for choosing online research vs. the phone: time efficient (76%), cost effective (68%), convenient for physician (41%), and accessibility to physicians (41%).

Customer Loyalty Spurs Retailers to Develop E-Commerce

Forty-six percent of retailers cite customer loyalty programs as their priority for developing e-commerce technology in the next 12-24 months, according to a survey by the Aberdeen Group. Retailers expressed "the need to deliver to its customer base in order to improve sales and increase order size." Other areas retailers are looking to improve include more interactive web sites with faster-loading images and features such as shopping carts. "Retailers are seeking methods to attract new audiences, gain their attention and keep them coming back to online stores for more," says the report.

Medicaid switch to AMP carries consequences

Mar 5, 2007

By: [Reid Paul](#)

Drug Topics

The National Community Pharmacists Association is warning that implementation of a proposed rule for reimbursement for generic drugs through Medicaid may result in many pharmacies pulling out of the program or going out of business. Citing the results of a recent Government Accountability Office study and its own internal polling of members, Bruce Roberts, NCPA executive VP/CEO, warned that under the new rule patients would face a "serious danger of losing access to lifesaving prescriptions. What we're faced with is not a natural disaster but a public policy disaster."

In December, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services proposed a new rule that would change the Medicaid reimbursement rate for generic drugs. The rule change was mandated by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and instructed CMS to set the federal upper limit (FUL) for generics at 250% of the average manufacturers price (AMP). Currently, reimbursement is tied to average wholesale price figures, but critics have complained that AWP is not transparent.

Since the rule was announced in December, pharmacists have been highly critical of many of its aspects. CMS, for example, suggested that states could increase their dispensing fees in reaction to any reduction in federal payments, but as many pharmacy industry advocates insist, states are unlikely to do so, given their own budget restraints. Another point of contention has been CMS' insistence on including any rebates in the final price determination. As Bruce Semington, R.Ph., CEO of United Drugs, pointed out in the cooperative's comments, "This clearly benefits manufacturers and disadvantages

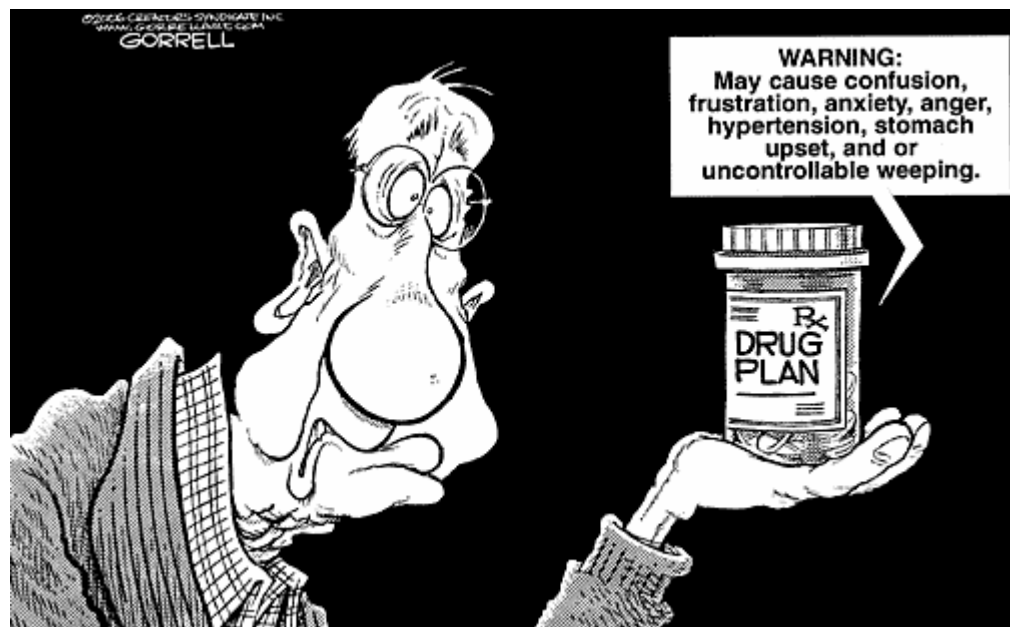
independent pharmacies because these price reductions are not shared with independents."

Still, it was not until GAO released its study that pharmacists had a precise idea of the impact. "We've never had the ability to document the impact of the rule change before now," Charlie Sewell, NCPA's VP of government affairs, told *Drug Topics*. "Now we have seen the numbers. Having the documentation clearly makes the case that this proposed reimbursement system is in need of major changes."

GAO researchers looked at a list of 77 of the most commonly prescribed and most expensive generic medications in the Medicaid program, concluding that the reimbursement rate for pharmacists under the new rule would be on average 36% below the cost of acquisition. GAO received previously unavailable AMP data from CMS to reach its conclusions.

Yet it is unclear whether the rule will undergo any changes. The comment period for the rules ended Feb. 20, and it is unclear how soon before the July 1 implementation date the final rule would be published. Still, as Roberts explained to reporters, "We've been working with CMS and Congress and explaining how devastating this rule would be for community pharmacy, and CMS has not given any indication that it will change this rule at all."

When NCPA surveyed its members, it found that 86% reported that the GAO study would impact their decision on whether to participate in their state Medicaid program. For many of these pharmacies, Roberts and Sewell warned, leaving Medicaid might be the first step to bankruptcy or retirement. On average, Medicaid made up more than 20% of the business at the surveyed pharmacies. "If these cuts go in as proposed, pharmacies will go out of business in a matter of weeks," Sewell predicted.



Auto-fill robot increases speed and accuracy

The new AutoMed Efficiency Pharmacy R800 robot can fill as many as 200 labeled prescriptions an hour with 99.99% accuracy according to its maker, AmerisourceBergen. The robot is designed for high-volume retail and health-system outpatient pharmacies with between 400 and 1,000 Rxs per day and can hold 220 large-capacity canisters. The robot can be used as a stand-alone vial-filling system or it can provide order management when used in conjunction with AmerisourceBergen's workflow management software.

Biologic gets new indication for Crohn's disease

Adalimumab (Humira, Abbott) is now approved for a second indication for use by patients with moderately to severely active Crohn's disease who are not responding to conventional therapy to reduce signs and symptoms and induce and maintain clinical remission. The new approval was based on results from three clinical trials in more than 1,400 adult patients and evaluated the efficacy of adalimumab in patients who were naive to anti-tumor necrosis factor alpha therapy. According to Abbott, this approval marks the indication to launch with the Humira Pen, a method of self-injection approved by the FDA in June 2006. Adalimumab was previously approved for reducing the signs and symptoms and inducing clinical remission in patients who have lost response or have become intolerant to infliximab (Remicade, Centocor).

Compounded steroids lead to four arrests

The owners, a pharmacist, and the marketing director at Orlando, Fla.-based Signature Pharmacy were arrested and at least two dozen more indictments are expected as a result of a two-year investigation into the illegal sale of compounded steroid, according to a report in the Albany Times Union. Records from the pharmacy were seized following the investigation by the Albany County, N.Y., district attorney. The customers include Los Angeles Angels center fielder Gary Matthews Jr., as well as NFL players, college athletes, and others. The investigation is centering on the role of mail-order and on-line pharmacies and the traffic of bogus steroid prescriptions. More arrests are expected in Alabama, New York, and Texas in the ongoing investigation.

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