



Alliance for Patient Medication Safety

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Alliance for Patient Medication Safety Announces Adherence Discovery Project Recipients

RICHMOND, Va., December 3, 2010 – The Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS), a supporting organization of the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA), announces the six discovery projects that will identify ways in which pharmacists can assist patients improve medication adherence. This activity is intended to produce measurable, replicable and sustainable programs in community pharmacy to improve adherence or methods to identify non-adherent patients. APMS received funding from Pfizer to support these projects.

The Arizona Pharmacy Alliance will oversee an adherence team, comprised of pharmacists, behavioral health specialists and community health advisors, to improve outcomes for underserved patients in Tucson, AZ. The specific aims are to examine the effectiveness of the team on improving adherence, conduct an evaluation of the team concept from both the provider and patient perspective, and examine potential for expanding collaboration to the community at large.

The Connecticut Pharmacists Association along with Arrow Pharmacy in Hartford, CT will use motivational interviewing techniques/skills to probe and identify reasons for patients not picking up medications. Based on assessment of patient responses, the pharmacist will recommend one or more interventions such as referring the patient to a PharmNetEx (a subsidiary of the Connecticut Pharmacists Association) pharmacist for comprehensive MTM evaluation, enrolling the patient to receive refill reminder calls, or recommending follow up with the prescriber.

The Iowa Pharmacy Association will use pharmacists from CarePro Health Services and other pharmacies that have been trained as health coaches through an application-based continuing pharmacy education activity. They will work to demonstrate improvements in medication adherence through a health coach intervention. This project will serve as a pilot project to further advance the role of pharmacists as health coaches, particularly to improve quality measures and enhance medication therapy management activities.

The Massachusetts Pharmacist Association along with The Medicap Pharmacy of Adel, IA will provide an adherence service consisting of an electronic closure, The Pill Timer. The electronic closure is to be programmed by a patient or caregiver and will provide an audio and visual alert, reminding the patient that their next dose of medication is due. The device also tells patients if or when they last took their medication, eliminating a patients chances of over or under dosing. The service will also consist of a patient counseling session on how to use the device and the importance of medication adherence.

The Virginia Pharmacists Association along with SuperioRx Care in Richmond, VA will use a collaborative model of pharmacist-to-pharmacist interaction between the primary care office and the community pharmacy. The proposal addresses multiple factors related to poor adherence with statins, including promotion of timely follow-up and education regarding adverse effects and lifestyle changes. A project of this type also promotes the development of the role of a pharmacist in a primary care site where pharmacist integration into the Patient-Centered Medical Home model is desired.

The Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin will distribute a pharmacy practice tool to assist pharmacists and patients in clearly identifying barriers to adherence and discuss possible strategies that will work best for each patient. The tool which is a pocket-size, fold-out card, can be used as a resource for pharmacists during regular patient consultations or during comprehensive medication reviews. The goals are to increase patient understanding of barriers to adherence, to increase patient adherence to prescribed medications, and to assist pharmacists in facilitating this process with their patients.

The Adherence Discovery Projects are designed to be conducted over a six-month period and will begin in January 2011. The projects approach improving adherence in a variety of ways and many incorporated adherence measures from the Pharmacy Quality Alliance. Methodology and results will be shared with each of the state pharmacy associations and their members.

"As part of Pfizer's dedication to improving patient care and quality of life through improving adherence, we are pleased to support the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety Adherence Discovery Projects," said David Searle, R.Ph., director, Pharmacy Development. "We believe a critical component for community pharmacists is discovering and sharing interventions that will improve adherence."

The **Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS)** strives to foster a culture of quality within the profession of pharmacy that promotes a continuous systems analysis to develop best practices that will reduce medication errors, improve medication use and enhance patient care. APMS is a supporting organization of NASPA. To learn more go to www.medicationsafety.org.

The **National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA)** promotes leadership, sharing, learning, and policy exchange among state pharmacy associations and pharmacy leaders nationwide, and provides education and advocacy to support pharmacists, patients, and communities working together to improve public health. NASPA was founded in 1927 as the National Council of State Pharmacy Association Executives (NCSPA). For more information, please visit www.naspa.us.

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