Academy of Independent Pharmacists—Texas Members Now NCPA Members, Too

The Academy of Independent Pharmacists-Texas is now providing NCPA membership as an added benefit to its members.

“AIP-Texas has been a strong advocate of independent pharmacy and supporter of NCPA,” said Robert J. Greenwood, RPh, NCPA president. “We are excited to now have all AIP-Texas members joining NCPA to strengthen the voice of independent pharmacists and their patients.”

“AIP-Texas is pleased to be able to provide NCPA membership to its investors,” said Ed Horton, RPh, AIP-Texas chairman. “AIP-Texas is committed to supporting NCPA’s efforts. This partnership is a natural complement to our joining forces with American Pharmacies to create the Texas Pharmacy Business Council. By uniting, independent community pharmacists can help to advance our profession and our ability to continue providing cost-saving care to patients.”

AIP-Texas promotes the practice of independent pharmacy in Texas by providing a forum for independents to exchange information, develop strategies, goals, and objectives. AIP-Texas advocates on legislative and regulatory issues on behalf of independent pharmacists and their patients both in Texas and across the United States.

Adherence—It Only Takes a Minute

By Suzanne Stepp

How does a person become a professional pianist, basketball player, or bull rider? Practice—and lots of it! The skills so perfected by these people are not merely instinctive. Through continual repetition and countless hours of dedication, they have gained enough knowledge and aptitude to be considered professionals in their fields.

As pharmacists, we, too, want to be regarded as professionals. As our profession evolves, the knowledge of monitoring for and counseling on medication adherence becomes a vital part of our everyday goals.

To properly educate pharmacists on how to become experts in adherence, we must go back to the basics. The first year of pharmacy school, although already overwhelming, is where students should be introduced to the importance of adherence. The vitality of the subject should then be emphasized throughout pharmacy school. Once the students become pharmacists, the significance of patient adherence is instilled into their brains as if pharmacy without adherence counseling and monitoring would be absurd.

The more adherence counseling and monitoring are incorporated into didactic learning and experiential education, the more accustomed students will become to recognizing adherence shortfalls and speaking to the patients about the importance of correctly taking their medications.

The solution, though, is not simply lecturing students on the importance of counseling patients on adherence to ingrain the significance of the concept into their brains. Pharmacy students need hands-on experience throughout pharmacy school. By familiarizing them with one-on-one patient interactions, beginning with mock scenarios and progressing to real-life situations, pharmacy students will evolve into pharmacists possessing skills for efficient patient counseling on both medications and adherence.

Pharmacists are on the front lines of patient care. They speak...
How Long Before I Reverse a Prescription?

Q: PAAS is frequently asked, “How long should I wait before I reverse a prescription that was not picked up?”

A: A maximum of 14 days

Some contracts actually require that a prescription not picked up within 10 days be reversed and returned to stock. Having a regular quality assurance system to monitor pick-up bins is important. One suggestion is to assign a technician to this duty two or three days a week. Any claims in pick-up older than 10 days should be pulled, reversed and returned to stock.

Remember—it is essential to have an accurate fill date for your records instead of fretting about having to reprocess a few prescriptions or jeopardize a contract for not reversing unclaimed prescriptions on a timely basis.

By Mark Jacobs, RPh, PAAS National, the Pharmacy Audit Assistance Service. For more information call 888-870-7227 toll free.

with patients on a daily basis about their medications, and patients trust the recommendations pharmacists make for leading healthier lives. By not learning and practicing adherence counseling during school, upcoming pharmacists are lacking a key piece of education necessary to provide well-rounded patient care. To fully benefit from their chronic medications, patients must be informed of the importance of taking them consistently.

Additionally, the act of patient adherence is expected by pharmacists, but many patients have difficulty remembering to take their medications. By recommending adherence tools, such as alarm clocks and pillboxes, simplifying medication regimens, and monitoring for side effects, pharmacists can positively impact patients’ health outcomes.

Just as the other professionals of the world acquire their admirable abilities, so must pharmacists attain and cultivate their patient care skills. Practice may not make perfect, but it does develop expertise required to effectively communicate the benefits of correctly taking prescribed medication and the consequences of non-adherence. Independent pharmacists like you can have such a positive impact on reinforcing adherence skills learned in the classroom. We look to practitioners in the community to extend our adherence education while on rotations.

Suzanne Stepp is a 2011 doctor of pharmacy candidate at Mercer University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.