



## PRESS RELEASE

### CONTACTS:

**Chrissy Shott**, (703) 837-4266; [cshott@nacds.org](mailto:cshott@nacds.org)  
National Association of Chain Drug Stores

**John Norton**, (703) 600-1174; [john.norton@ncpanet.org](mailto:john.norton@ncpanet.org)  
National Community Pharmacists Association

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **CCPA Educates More than 535,000 Doctors about New Prescription Requirement, Warns Delay of Policy is Needed to Ensure Patients' Access to Medication**

**Alexandria, VA** –The Coalition for Community Pharmacy Action (CCPA) blast-faxed an educational piece to more than 535,000 doctors serving Medicaid patients nationwide. However, the group consisting of the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) and the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) warns that the rushed approach of a new law likely will jeopardize Medicaid patients' access to the prescription drugs they need to stay healthy or recover from illness.

Preliminary feedback from physicians who received the fax validated the concern about lack of awareness of the implementation date, which is less than a week away – October 1. A number of physicians who received the faxed communication indicated that it was the first they are hearing of this pending requirement.

In addition, there is concern that as more and more physicians learn about the requirement, there may be delays in acquiring the appropriate paper. An Illinois-based paper company, Micro Format, Inc that produces tamper-resistant prescription paper, posted a notice on their website (<http://www.rpaper.com/>) that they can no longer accept new orders for tamper-resistant prescription paper due to the high demand.

A provision tucked into an Iraq war spending bill (Public Law 110-28), finalized on May 25, 2007, requires that written Medicaid prescriptions be on tamper-resistant paper beginning on October 1, 2007. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on August 17, 2007, issued guidance to State Medicaid Directors on how to implement the requirement – just 45 days before it goes into effect.

“This law has great potential to negatively impact Medicaid patients, pharmacies and physicians. Due to the extremely short time period for implementation and a lack of a comprehensive education campaign by any government entity, we are trying to inform as many providers as possible,” CCPA says in its communication to doctors.

CCPA fears that despite its best efforts to educate doctors, a lack of physician awareness of the requirement and an inadequate supply of compliant prescription paper will disrupt Medicaid patients’ medication therapy. CCPA says this will result in human costs and expensive hospital stays and emergency room visits when patients do not take the medication they need.

At least two hundred health organizations are known to have formally advocated for a delay in the new requirement, including State Medicaid Directors, the American Medical Association and state medical societies, and health organizations ranging from the American Academy of Pediatrics to the American Diabetes Association.

CCPA expressed thanks to Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and George Voinovich (R-OH), who introduced legislation, S. 2085, to delay implementation by six months, and also thanked Rep. Charles Wilson (D-OH), who introduced a House companion bill, H.R. 3647, also calling for a six-month delay.

While community pharmacy needs immediate intervention on the pending implementation date of tamper-resistant prescription paper, another critical issue continues to weigh heavily on the community pharmacy industry. The final rule issued by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on Medicaid Prescription Drug Reimbursement establishes average manufacturer price, or AMP, as the basis for the calculation of Medicaid payments to pharmacies for “multiple source” (primarily generic) prescription medications.

The policy is scheduled to take effect in January 2008, triggering \$8 billion in cuts from Medicaid pharmacy reimbursement for generic drugs. A report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) stated that this new reimbursement formula will reimburse pharmacies on average 36% below their costs to acquire generic medications.

CCPA hopes to raise awareness and encourage the House to pass the Saving Our Community Pharmacies Act of 2007 (H.R. 3140) and for the Senate to pass the Fair Medicaid Drug Payment Act of 2007 (S.1951). Both of these bills offer solutions that would reimburse pharmacies fairly and prevent a possible disruption in care for Medicaid beneficiaries.

A complete copy of CCPA’s communication to Medicaid doctors is [available here](#).

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### **About the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)**

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) represents the nation's leading retail chain pharmacies and suppliers, helping them better meet the changing needs of their patients and customers. Chain pharmacies operate more than 38,000 pharmacies, employ 114,000 pharmacists, fill more than 2.3 billion prescriptions yearly, and have annual sales of nearly \$700 billion. Other members include almost 1,000 suppliers of products and services to the chain drug industry. NACDS international membership has grown to include 87 members from 28 countries. For more information

about NACDS, visit [www.nacds.org](http://www.nacds.org).

**About the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA)**

[The National Community Pharmacists Association](#), founded in 1898, represents the nation's community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 24,000 pharmacies. The nation's independent pharmacies, independent pharmacy franchises, and independent chains dispense nearly half of the nation's retail prescription medicines.