



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHAIN DRUG STORES



Position Statement Regarding Required Residencies for New Pharmacy Graduates

Pharmacist education is of vital importance to the health and welfare of our nation. As such, the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) and the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA), the organizations representing retail pharmacy, support all educational activities that prepare pharmacist graduates to provide care to health care consumers and succeed in their chosen workplace environment. Pharmacy residencies are a valuable option for some pharmacy school graduates and our organizations support voluntary residencies. However, we oppose efforts to make residencies a required part of the pharmacy school curriculum, pharmacist training, or licensure requirements. Both organizations strongly believe that requiring post-graduate residencies would not be in the best interest of patient care or for the profession for the following reasons:

Current required Doctor of Pharmacy degree is sufficient - Pharmacy schools already prepare Doctor of Pharmacy graduates with the education and hands-on experience they need to provide direct patient care. Increasing the mandatory educational requirements may provide only marginal additional benefit, while discouraging new students from entering the profession. Adding a required residency would result in many pharmacy students graduating with seven or more years of pharmacy education and training. In comparison, there are numerous other desirable professions where the student can graduate and enter the workforce in a shorter amount of time (engineering, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, etc). If there is a unified perception in the profession that the current Doctor of Pharmacy degree is not adequately preparing pharmacists for practice, we believe that there may be opportunity for changes to be made within the current curriculum infrastructure to address any perceived shortcomings.

Current pharmacist workforce shortage - Mandatory residencies will exacerbate existing pharmacist shortage. According to the most recent Pharmacy Manpower Project's Pharmacist Demand Index, the national demand for pharmacists is 4.07 indicating that overall nationwide, there is some difficulty filling pharmacist positions. None of the 50 states indicated a demand level that is less or much less than the pharmacist supply available. Requiring another year of pharmacist training through a required residency will only increase the imbalance between pharmacist supply and demand.

Lack of residency sites - In 2007, approximately 1,600 first year residency positions were available and 1,300 of those residency positions were filled.¹ The majority of these positions are in acute care settings, not community pharmacies. In order to meet this proposed residency training requirement, according to one estimate, if 75% of graduates choose to enter direct patient care roles, then at least 9,000 residency positions would

have to be available annually by 2020. We do not see how it would be possible to meet this residency site demand.

Overall cost to the retail industry - Most new residency sites would need to be developed in community pharmacies and total training costs for this number of residents could reach \$1 billion annually.² This tremendous cost and use of resources would have an extremely negative impact on community pharmacy, which is already taxed substantially by the financial burdens of retail operation.

In summary, in light of the current advanced Doctor of Pharmacy degree and marketplace dynamics, the organizations representing retail pharmacy oppose any attempts by national organizations to mandate residencies as a component for obtaining a pharmacy license. We urge that any perceived academic shortcomings be addressed within the existing six-year degree infrastructure.

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About NACDS

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores 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 39,000 pharmacies, employ 114,000 pharmacists, fill more than 2.4 billion prescriptions yearly, and have annual sales of over \$700 billion. Other members include 1,010 suppliers of products and services to the chain drug industry. NACDS international membership includes 101 members from 29 countries. For more information about NACDS, visit www.nacds.org.

About NCPA

The National Community Pharmacists Association, founded in 1898, represents the nation's community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 23,000 pharmacies. The nation's independent pharmacies, independent pharmacy franchise and independent chains employ more than 300,000 people and represent an \$84 billion marketplace, dispensing nearly half of the nation's retail prescription medicines. For more information about NCPA, visit www.ncpanet.org.

¹ American Society of Health System Pharmacists. Record number of pharmacy students head for residencies. Available at http://www.ashp.org/s_ashp/article_press.asp?CID=168&DID=2037&id=19381. Accessed February 15, 2008.

² Johnson, Thomas. Pharmacy work force in 2020: implications of requiring residency training for practice. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2008; 65:166-70.