Drug Czar calls on community pharmacists

President Barack Obama’s inaugural drug abuse strategy in 2010 labeled opioid overdose a growing national crisis and laid specific actions and goals for reducing nonmedical prescription opioid and heroin use. Part and parcel to this strategy is the role of community pharmacists, who U.S. “Drug Czar” Michael Botticelli called on to continue to support. Botticelli, named director of National Drug Control Policy at the White House on Feb. 11, 2015, discussed three important ways community pharmacists can help the administration address opioid use disorders and the incredible negative consequences that have come with it. “By far the bulk of opioids come from prescribing. That is why it is so important that community pharmacists take advantage of the policies on prescribing drug monitoring programs, safe storage and disposal, and locks on distribution,” Botticelli said. "NCPA is stronger today than we were yesterday. We are setting in motion new ideas and new business models that will define our future." — NCPA President John Sherrer, RPh

Bright Future in Store for Community Pharmacists

With a backdrop of the nation’s capital, the NCPA 2015 Annual Convention kicked off at Sunday's First General Session. In his farewell address as NCPA president, John T. Sherrer, RPh, said he was inspired by NCPA’s long history of tireless efforts on behalf of independent community pharmacy. “It is great to be here on the banks of the Potomac just outside of our nation’s capital, where so much of NCPA’s identity has been forged,” said Sherrer, whose presentation was delivered via video. “NCPA was founded in 1898 to fight a congressional tax plan that targeted pharmacies. The fight of small business health care providers to grow their businesses and to serve their patients was as pertinent then as it is now, and that fight continues today.”

He pointed to several notable NCPA triumphs on Capitol Hill over the past decade, including the override in 2008 of a presidential veto. The vetoed bill, which included a 14-day prompt pay requirement, was overridden by President Barack Obama.

Freakonomics Author Inspired by Simple Ideas

With a good measure of humor, facts, cynicism, and optimism, bestselling author Steven D. Levitt gave NCPA 2015 Annual Convention attendees several stories to ponder during Sunday’s First General Session.

Levitt, co-author of *Freakonomics*, *SuperFreakonomics*, *Think Like a Freak*, and *When To Rob a Bank*, was once dubbed the Indiana Jones of economics by the Wall Street Journal.

His first childhood jaunt in the early 1970s at age 6 was to a community pharmacy, Schneider Drug Store. That first visit spurred him to come back for comics and candy, but also introduced him to owner, Tom Sengupta. Years later, when Levitt returned to Minneapolis, he picked up prescriptions for his mom at Schneider’s, where Sengupta greeted him by name, even providing a hero’s welcome after Levitt’s *Freakonomics* was released.

“In a nutshell, that encapsulates what you all are all about, that loyalty,” said Levitt, adding that Schneider’s is the only local provider his family still uses today. “That’s a real testimony to Tom, who had the kind of loyalty to his customers that inspired their loyalty.”

Originally published in the U.S. in 2005, *Freakonomics* instantly became a cultural phenomenon, selling more
Dear Independent Pharmacist,

As a practicing community pharmacist and member of NCPA, you know all too well that pharmacists are being asked to play a more active and visible role in providing care to patients. We at Surescripts believe the timely, electronic delivery of healthcare information will be critical to achieving this expanded role and realizing the vision of truly connecting healthcare.

Despite the millions of electronic prescriptions from Surescripts you process each year, we realize that many of you don’t have a direct relationship with Surescripts. We’d like to take this opportunity to reiterate our commitment to community pharmacists and share some updates on key topics affecting your pharmacy practice.

**Independent Pharmacy Line**
Surescripts can work with your vendor to resolve e-prescribing issues
We’ll work with your pharmacy IT vendor—and physician EHR vendors as necessary—to ensure your issues are resolved. We’ve also expanded the capabilities of the Independent Pharmacy Line to better support you. We can now serve as your first point of contact when you have issues related to e-prescription quality. To reach the Independent Pharmacy Line call (877) 877-3962 or email independent-assistance@surescripts.com.

**Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Substances (EPCS)**
Surescripts can help you process all prescriptions in a single electronic workflow
EPCS is now legal in all 50 states and Washington, DC. In an effort to educate doctors and increase EPCS volume, Surescripts created a comprehensive online resource at www.getEPCS.com. We appreciate your help in spreading the word as well, especially to your local prescribers.

**2015 E-Prescribing Rebate**
Surescripts continues to reduce the cost and improve the quality of e-prescribing
We’re pleased to announce that we have increased the amount of our rebate in 2015 and eligible pharmacies should receive their first rebate payment in early 2016. If you have any questions about the rebate, please call (703) 921-2010 or email rebate@surescripts.com.

**E-Prescribing Optimization**
Surescripts is committed to the future of e-prescribing
There is an unprecedented level of activity on our network and we feel that now is the time to invest in the future of e-prescribing. Not only are we implementing the feedback of our valued customers; we’re adding totally new capabilities like the prescription change and cancel transactions. We’re currently focused on critical quality and performance improvements like ensuring every prescription is accurate, complete, and unambiguous when it reaches your pharmacy. We are also working to transform our benefit and formulary services to ensure the necessary benefit information is included in prescriptions to expedite insurance processing.

I look forward to talking with you in person during the NCPA Annual Conference. If you have any questions, I encourage you to visit us at booth 602.

Sincerely,

Tom Skelton
Chief Executive Officer
NCPA members had a busy weekend in National Harbor, Md., as the Annual Convention and Exposition got underway. Attendees took part in a variety of educational sessions, covering topics ranging from pharmacy-based immunization delivery certificate training to building value of your investment for retirement. This year’s convention programming includes more than 30 hours of continuing education workshops, seminars, and symposia designed to lift your business. Attendees also were able to visit more than 235 exhibit booths at the 2015 Trade Exposition.
Award Winners Recognized at Opening General Session

**Prescription Drug Safety Award**

Brian Beach, RPh (center), of the Kelley-Ross Pharmacy Group, Seattle, was named the winner of the 2015 NCPA Prescription Drug Safety Award. Sponsored by Smart-Fill, the award recognizes pharmacists who have reached out in their communities to provide education on the benefits of the correct use of prescription drug products and the hazards associated with their misuse. DeAnn Mullins, PharmD, CDE, NCPA Board of Directors chairman, presented the award, along with White House “Drug Czar” Michael Botticelli (second from left) and Tim Gallagher (second from right) and Tom Jackson from Smart-Fill.

Four years ago Beach and his business partners made a commitment to implement solutions designed to help stem the tide of opioid overdoses. They focused on breaking down barriers surrounding the issues of timely access to naloxone, the drug antidote for reversing opioid overdoses; demystifying the stigma associated with its usage; and raising greater community awareness of the drug's potential.

**Corporate Recognition Award**

JoAnn Gaio (center), senior account manager, and Mike McBride, vice president of partner relations, accepted the 2015 NCPA Corporate Recognition Award on behalf of Upsher-Smith Laboratories. DeAnn Mullins, PharmD, CDE, NCPA Board of Directors chairman, presented the award, which recognizes outstanding support and work on behalf of independent community pharmacies.

Beyond its support for NCPA, Upsher-Smith Laboratories has been an initiator of pro-independent community pharmacy initiatives, including the Healthcare Distribution Management Association's (HDMA) Front End Forum — which is done in cooperation with NCPA and the Consumer Healthcare Products Association — and research projects with Hamacher Resource Group. In fact, the collaboration with Hamacher has resulted in a three-volume series of eBooks designed to help independent community pharmacies, with the newest on titled *Promotional Event Planning: Made Easy.*

**Willard B. Simmons Independent Pharmacist of the Year**

Joe Moose, RPh (center), co-owner of Moose Pharmacy and its multiple locations in and around Concord, N.C., has been named the 2015 NCPA Willard B. Simmons Independent Pharmacist of the Year.

Upsher Smith Laboratories sponsored the award, which recognizes an independent pharmacist for exemplary leadership and commitment to independent pharmacy and to their community. DeAnn Mullins (left), PharmD, CDE, NCPA Board of Directors chairman, presented the award with JoAnn Gaio, senior account manager with Upsher-Smith Laboratories.

Moose’s commitment to the future generation of pharmacists can be seen through his serving as a primary preceptor for several university programs. He established collaborative practice agreements with local physicians to integrate community pharmacists into a patient-centered medical home. He has also partnered with the City of Charlotte and Union County to manage employees enrolled in diabetes and other disease management programs, and he is the lead community pharmacy coordinator for Community Care of North Carolina, Inc., which supports experimental pilot programs looking for best practices for implementation on a national scale.

The award is named in honor of someone who exemplified these qualities: Willard B. Simmons, a former executive secretary of NCPA (which was then known as the National Association of Retail Druggists) and a longtime NCPA Foundation trustee.

**Garner Insights at Educational Sessions Tuesday**

- **7–8 a.m.**
  - **PCCA Breakfast: Opportunities for the Pharmacy: Compounding, Innovation, and Nutrition — Niche Plus Patient Care Equals Profit**
  - **Speakers:** Bill Letendre, MS, RP, MBA, FIAACP, vice president of Compounding Pharmacy Management, PCCA, Houston, Texas, and John Preckshot, RPh, CCN, FIAACP, Director of Wellness Works Nutrition, PCCA, Houston

- **8–9:30 a.m.**
  - **Opportunities and Reimbursement Models for the Community Pharmacist in Primary Care Partnerships**
  - **Speaker:** Bryan Ziegler, PharmD, executive director, Kennedy Pharmacy Innovation Center, Columbia, S.C.

- **9:45–11:15 a.m.**
  - **Thriving in the Business of Nutrition**
  - **Speaker:** John Preckshot, RPh, CCN, FIAACP, director of Wellness Works, PCCA, Houston

- **11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.**
  - **Rethink Pharmacy: Hiring a Clinical Pharmacist to Expand Your Opportunities**
  - **Speakers:** Randy McDonough, PharmD, Towncrest Pharmacy, Iowa City, Iowa, and Elaine Marie Ladd, PharmD, Ladd Family Pharmacy, Boise, Idaho

**Essential Oils: A New Opportunity for Front-End Profits**

**Speaker:** Annette Duncan, RPh, PharmD, Wynn’s Pharmacy, Griffin, Ga.

**2:45–4:15 p.m.**

**All Hands on Deck: Using Your Pharmacy Team to Build Your Patient Services**

**Speakers:** Matt Osterhaus, RPh, Osterhaus Pharmacy, Maquoketa, Iowa; Chris Harlow, PharmD, St. Matthews Community Pharmacy, Louisville, Ky.; and Jake Olson, PharmD, president and CEO, Skywalk Pharmacy, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Wednesday**

**Post-Convention Program**

- **9 a.m.–12 p.m.**
  - **Creating, Telling, and Selling Your Value Story**
  - Pre-registration is required

**Speakers:** Marsha Millonig, MBA, BPharm, president and CEO, Catalyst Enterprises, LLC, Eagan, Minn.; Paul Mulhausen, chief medical officer, and Wayne Glowa, chief marketing officer, Kramer Printing, Waunakee, Wis.; Jennifer Bruckart, director of outreach and education, WeCare Pharmacy, Warrenton, Va.; and Carole Hayward, executive director, Clear Message Media, Alexandria, Va.
Introducing Scriptmax™, the new pharmacy claims analytics service from Innovatix.

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survive. As leaders in our community, we are willing to adapt,” Sherrer said. “We have to be resilient and be fighters. Community pharmacists must be resilient and fight.

Remained determined, community pharmacist Schwartzwald, RPh, of Guidepoint Pharmacy in Brainerd, Minn., pointed to the struggles faced by his patient, John Szilagyi, a tax auditor with the IRS for 30 years, who attributed his ability to persevere and keep moving forward because he loves what he does, and we know we can make a difference.

“NCPA is stronger today than we were yesterday. We are setting in motion new ideas and new business models that will define our future. Challenges and setbacks are not only possible, they are guaranteed. One thing is certain: We stand together, and we are proactive,” Sherrer said.

“People care about things that are much more than money, and my fellow economists often get this wrong,” Levitt said. “The story of John Szilagyi is powerful because it’s a story about an idea. It’s so obvious, but how did he come up with it? The great thing is that he thought of it. Somehow John Szilagyi’s mind triggered the idea. To me, that is brilliant. That’s what gets me excited. These simple ideas are within our reach.”

Visit the Exhibit Hall

Don’t miss this outstanding opportunity to learn about the latest products and services available to independent community pharmacists. The Exhibit Hall is open from noon to 4 p.m. Monday, with a buffet lunch served at noon.

Be part of the conversation #NCPA2015

NOTABLE TWEETS

@BZRH: Proud of all @Commparmacy students presenting at yesterday’s biz plan competition. The countless hours of work paid off! #NCPA2015Strong

@WHITCOW: It turns out, he said, about one in 10 children in America reported on tax forms that first year alone was worth $2 billion,” said Levitt, who met up with Szilagyi years later. He learned Szilagyi did not receive compensation for his idea, but that did not trouble him. Szilagyi rather hoped for the IRS to recognize him with a plaque on the wall. “For John Szilagyi, it wasn’t about money,” Levitt said. “It was about respect and the social component. My story about Tom Sengupta is exactly that. People care about things that are much more than money, and my fellow economists often get this wrong.”

The NCPA Daily News is the official publication of the NCPA Annual Convention. It is published by Ascend Integrated Media as a service to members of the National Community Pharmacists Association.

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