PAMA
Pharmacists Advancing Medication Adherence

Moving Forward on a Solid Foundation:
Year One Progress Report
A strong foundation has been laid to achieve the PAMA vision.

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Pharmacists Advancing Medication Adherence

Medication non-adherence is a growing problem that saps vital resources from the nation’s health care system, becoming a major driver of rising health care costs and impacting patient outcomes.

The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) is committed to advancing and improving patient medication adherence. We have developed an ambitious, comprehensive and realistic five-year program designed to make a significant impact. To achieve this objective, NCPA has implemented a strategic initiative called PAMA: Pharmacists Advancing Medication Adherence™.

Poor adherence is most prevalent among those with chronic diseases. A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) study concluded that over half of all Americans suffer from at least one chronic disease. Among the leading chronic diseases are more than 170 million cases of cancers, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke, mental disorders and pulmonary conditions.

Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Public Health. Alarminglly, chronic diseases currently affect 45% of the population (133 million Americans), account for 81% of all hospital admissions, 91% of all prescriptions filled, 76% of physician visits, and continues to grow at dramatic rates.

For many of these chronic illnesses, medications are a preferred course of treatment. Yet, for a variety of reasons, many chronically ill patients are non-adherent and do not take their medications as prescribed, or complete their regimen as their doctor recommended. The cost of non-adherence with medication therapy now is estimated to exceed $290 billion annually, and growing.

Compounding the impact of non-adherence is an increasing shortage of primary care physicians, combined with the expansion of health insurance coverage to 30 million more patients, placing greater demand on physician time for patient interactions. This dilemma will only get greater, as the Association of American Medical Colleges estimates a potential shortage of 150,000 physicians in the next decade. Pharmacists can and do fill this void by providing medication counseling and education.
PAMA CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

As highly trained medication experts, community pharmacists are easily accessible and increasingly being looked at to play a larger role in the health care team. Studies document that consumers consistently place high trust in pharmacists and value their opinions and recommendations.

NCPA’s commitment to addressing the adherence challenge is realistic and targeted, focusing on what pharmacists can, should, and must do to advance patient medication adherence.

**OUR VISION IS CLEAR:** Patient adherence activities are embedded in the daily practice of community pharmacists. By 2015, actions taken by community pharmacists will result in improvement in medication adherence rates.

**OUR GOAL IS WELL DEFINED:** Influence community pharmacists to recognize and provide adherence services as a core component of the profession making it as equally important as the dispensing process.

As we continue moving forward with the PAMA initiative, NCPA will work in collaboration with organizations and stakeholders committed to advancing and enhancing patient medication adherence. We are pleased that pharmaceutical manufacturers, patient disease support groups and seniors organizations recognize the merits of this initiative and are committed to its success. We are gratified that helping to provide unrestricted funding for the PAMA program are the Cardinal Health Foundation, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck and Pfizer Pharmaceuticals. In a companion effort, NCPA is a committed partner with the National Consumers League in its national adherence program Script Your Future.

Under the PAMA umbrella, we are developing programs that will:

- Provide tools for pharmacists to advance patient understanding and acceptance of adherence behavior, leading to improved medication adherence.
- Track pharmacist engagement and measure patient understanding of the importance of their medication regimen.
- Identify pharmacy practices and business incentives to support the initiative.
- Promote increased emphasis and commitment to integrating the concept of adherence practice habits in various phases of pharmacy education.
- Communicate results and effectiveness to policy makers, health care media, other health care providers, health plans, patients and their caregivers.
- Establish a Medication Adherence Resource Center that will become a central repository of resources, tools, training programs and best practices to assist pharmacists in expanding their adherence services.

While work has begun in the first year on numerous elements of these program components, the program is evolving and growing. This report covers PAMA’s first year of operations from July 2011-July 2012. A strong foundation has been laid to achieve the PAMA vision. These efforts are described in the following pages, highlighting progress in the four arenas of PAMA focus:

- Pharmacy education,
- Pharmacists and pharmacy operations,
- Patient care services, and
- Public policy.

We welcome your partnership and involvement with the PAMA program.

B. Douglas Hoey, RPh, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
Pharmacy Education
Advancing Medication Adherence via Education

There’s the old saying that once you learn how to ride a bicycle, you never forget. Similarly, once practical adherence techniques are instilled in the education process of pharmacy students, it likely becomes a life-long practice.

In order to ensure that pharmacists recognize and provide adherence services as a core competency to the profession, equally as important as the dispensing process, student pharmacists need to be prepared to enter into practice with the practical knowledge, skills, and attitudes to respond to and improve patient medication adherence.

One of the four elements of NCPA’s PAMA initiative is to collaborate with pharmacy academia to develop and produce pharmacist graduates who embrace the role as medication adherence counselor as a core competency.

Early in the development of the PAMA program, an Adherence Advisory Council of academicians was formed to conduct an environmental scan of pharmacy curricula to determine the extent to which adherence is included. Once this information was collected, the data was analyzed to identify gaps in pharmacy curricula regarding adherence.

The Council finalized and submitted the manuscript entitled, “Teaching Medication Adherence in US College and Schools of Pharmacy” to the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education (AJPE) which was published in June 2012.

The manuscript highlights faculty, preceptor, and student perceptions of adherence curriculum, identifies gaps in adherence education, and calls for pharmacy schools to embed more practical applications of adherence into their curriculum. Manuscript findings indicate that the majority of students are being taught the background concepts of medication adherence; however, intermediate and advanced concepts in medication adherence, such as conducting interventions, is not adequately covered to ensure students are able to apply these important concepts and solutions to medication non-adherence as pharmacists.

The challenge called upon schools to submit their innovative teaching tools in the area of medication adherence.

INNOVATIVE MEDICATION ADHERENCE EDUCATORS CHALLENGE

To better understand the resources and teaching strategies currently being utilized to prepare student pharmacists to detect, monitor, and improve medication adherence in pharmacy practice, NCPA worked jointly with the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) in issuing a challenge to the schools and colleges of pharmacy to propose innovative tools designed to teach student pharmacists about medication adherence.

The challenge called upon schools to submit their innovative teaching tools in the area of medication adherence, including tools currently used in the curriculum and experiential learning, as well as ideas and concepts still in development or conceptual in nature, and identifying potential challenges to their implementation.

Jointly, representatives from AACP and NCPA served as reviewers for the Medication Adherence Challenge submissions, and a total of 37 concept
proposals from 26 colleges and schools of pharmacy were received and judged on criteria that included the impact, scalability, and innovation of the tool, as well as the tool’s application in an inter-professional learning environment. The winners include: The University of Arizona College of Pharmacy, University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, and The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy. Each challenge submission and new tools generated from the symposium are published on the NCPA and AACP websites.

AACP/NCPA ADHERENCE EDUCATORS SYMPOSIUM

In conjunction with AACP’s 2012 Annual Meeting at the Gaylord Palms Resort, in Kissemmee, Fla., NCPA hosted a half day symposium dedicated to adherence teaching. The goal of the symposium was to increase awareness of gaps in adherence education and provide educators with learning tools that can be incorporated into current curriculum. Pharmacy faculty members were provided with the opportunity to share best practices, resources, and teaching strategies currently being used to teach medication adherence. As part of this symposium, the winners of the Medication Adherence Educators Challenge presented their innovative educational tools during a medication adherence education panel.

The Symposium drew over 40 participants representing 30 schools and colleges of pharmacy. Participants had the opportunity to contribute their ideas and recommendations in the breakout sessions to an adherence educators’ toolkit that will be developed and disseminated to all schools and colleges of pharmacy later this year. A Curriculum Advisory Committee to include both faculty and student members was formed to assist in development of the toolkit, which will occur in the fall of 2012. All schools and colleges of pharmacy will be surveyed and assessed periodically throughout the 2012-13 academic year to identify which tools the schools are implementing, which are considered most effective and other benefits of the toolkit. Input will be sought on ways to improve current tools, as well as identification of additional tools to be developed and included in subsequent versions of the toolkit.

ADHERENCE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Stressing the importance of recognizing leaders who provide outstanding medication adherence services and education, NCPA established two new awards that will be presented annually beginning in 2012. The Outstanding Adherence Practitioner Award will recognize a community pharmacist who demonstrates a commitment to improving medication adherence and improving patient outcomes in a community pharmacy setting. The Outstanding Adherence Educator Award will recognize a pharmacy educator who makes a significant contribution to the education of pharmacy students in the area of medication adherence. Both awards will be presented at the NCPA Annual Convention and Trade Exposition, October 13-17, 2012.
Pharmacists and Pharmacy Operations

The Business Case for Adherence

Educating patients about proper use of their medication and adherence not only makes for good patient care, it also makes good business sense. However, developing new approaches and introduction of new adherence services bring changes in normal operations and potential added expense. To aid community pharmacists with understanding the financial impact of an adherence program, NCPA created a simple calculator to model the possible financial benefits to a pharmacy for raising adherence rates.

The Adherence Impact Calculator demonstrates the effect that improving patient medication adherence can offset the added expense of adding adherence services. The pharmacy’s financial performance improves over 12 months, 2 years and 5 years and the results demonstrate that its worth the time and investment for the pharmacy.

It is intuitive to understand why raising adherence rates will make a pharmacy more viable in today’s world of declining medical reimbursements. Pharmacy services, like other health care services in hospitals, clinics, doctors’ offices and elsewhere need to contribute to the financial health of the business. Every prescription that a patient fails to refill is a prescription that the pharmacist is unable to dispense. To put a price tag on this missed prescriptions opportunity, this calculator can help pharmacy owners better understand the size of the market that adherence represents over 12-month, two-year, and five-year windows. The pharmacy benefits, the patient benefits by improved adherence which can lead to improved overall health.

As of July 2012, the calculator has had over 2,200 visitors and over 4,000 page views. To use the calculator, visit www.NCPAnet.org/adherencecalculator

The Adherence Impact Calculator demonstrates the effect that improving patient medication adherence can offset the added expense of adding adherence services.
MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION
SUCCESS STORIES

Pharmacists are inspired by the success of their peers. NCPA is fortunate to have a number of influential practitioners that are making notable achievements with their adherence services. Two such pharmacies have been featured in America’s Pharmacist to acknowledge their success and encourage others to take advantage of what adherence services have to offer.

• NOT TAKING THEIR MEDICINE: L & S Pharmacy in Charleston, Mo., developed its own coordinated refill program that demonstrated significant success. Richard Logan, PharmD, and Tripp Logan, PharmD, share their story in their own words in America’s Pharmacist.

• SYNCHRONIZED SUCCESS: A feature article by Chris Linville of America’s Pharmacist highlights Abrams & Clark Pharmacy’s Personal Service Program that promotes adherence through a proactive and streamlined method.

THREE MODELS:
ONE BUSINESS CASE FOR ADHERENCE

NCPA’s 113th Annual Convention and Trade Exposition, October 2011, featured the topic of adherence as a continuing education breakfast symposium attended by nearly 250 pharmacists and pharmacy owners. The 1.5 hour program was recorded and converted to an Internet-based synchronized audio and slide presentation for NCPA’s continuing education web-based platform thereby extending the life of the program for the full three years of ACPE accreditation. Program description:

THREE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE MODELS:
ONE BUSINESS CASE FOR ADHERENCE: Are you looking for that one really great idea to take back to your pharmacy from this year’s convention? This symposium will introduce you to three pharmacy peers who have taken a single idea, adherence, and crafted it to profitably fit their unique pharmacy needs. Adherence has been proven to increase patient satisfaction, improve inventory management, pharmacy workflow and time management, and deliver better outcomes for the patient and pharmacy. Best practices and innovation, this program will demonstrate how you can take this idea home and craft your own profitable solution.

NCPA member Janet Kusler, RPh shared her experiences implementing a coordinated refill program in a presentation at the NCPh Annual Convention.
ADHERENCE: IT ONLY TAKES A MINUTE

Pharmacists looking for ways to incorporate adherence activities into their pharmacy need look no further. Adherence: It Only Takes a Minute is a series of short articles featuring clinical pearls, best practices, communication tips, and the business case behind improving patient medication adherence.

The monthly feature published in America’s Pharmacist began in July 2010, and more than 24 articles have been published to date. NCPA also makes these articles available to members via the NCPA Web site and to state pharmacy associations for publication in their newsletters and magazines.

Simple Methods to Improve Adherence
By David D. Pearcy, PharmD, CDE

Did you know that a patient living with diabetes using the pharmacy 80 percent would see the annual adherence? As independent pharmacists, we have an opportunity (and responsibility) to improve adherence with taking their medications.

At NCPA’s 2010 Legislative Conference, we asked a number of articles offering ways to improve adherence. Qualifying articles were to be the first 10 per year on how to improve adherence. Any articles that were not included in the list were not published. We did that! We were able to show that the pharmacy is continuing to improve the medication without reducing the schedule.

Patient Adherence Technology
By Lisa K. Morgan, PharmD

Technology can be an engendered part of your pharmacy. Technology can see us up in the morning, give us naps, keep us in touch with our health care team, and allow us to understand whether we need to take medications.

The Adherence Challenge

Adherence is one of the most important factors in patient health and well-being. Adherence is the percentage of a medication that a patient takes as directed. The key to improving adherence is to provide education and support to patients to help them adhere to their medication regimen.
Patient Care Services

Simplify My Meds: an Adherence Solution for Patients and Pharmacies

At the heart of the PAMA initiative are, of course, community pharmacists. NCPA has been hard at work over the past year to provide pharmacists with the necessary information and tools that will influence their behavior to increase patient medication adherence.

With the transformation of health care delivery to a focus on quality and outcomes, NCPA has chosen to seek innovative solutions that will improve care and lower costs. In turn, we developed Simplify My Meds, a turnkey adherence program based on the concept of refill synchronization and available to all association members. The program was launched in the summer of 2011, and there are currently nearly 500 community pharmacies offering this to their patients nationwide.

Based on the concept of refill synchronization, Simplify My Meds helps coordinate all of a patient’s prescriptions to be filled on the same day each month. The coordination of refills decreases regimen complexity which can help boost adherence, and provides an opportunity for the pharmacist to review all of a patient’s medications with the patient on a monthly basis to ensure safe and appropriate use. Simplify My Meds also promotes the concept of having a “pharmacy home,” a single community pharmacy where all of a patient’s medications are coordinated.

The Simplify My Meds model facilitates a more comprehensive and coordinated level of care. The enhanced communication among all those associated with the care of a patient completes the triad of care among the patient and caregivers, pharmacists, and prescribers. Patients and caregivers are actively involved in the decision-making process, and physicians are contacted when a mutual patient is enrolled in the program, and regularly informed of the patient’s progress. At the same time, pharmacies are also seeing the benefits of a more streamlined workflow, tighter inventory control, and greater efficiencies built in from the synchronized refill model that allow the pharmacist to focus on patient care.

Participating NCPA members have access to:

• Pharmacy Operations Manual: this helpful guide provides step-by-step detailed instructions for setting up and running a coordinated refill program. It contains a wealth of tips and best practices, as well as answers to frequently asked questions.

• Strong marketing support that accompanies the program, including a free starter kit of...
Simplify My Meds branded brochures, bag stuffers, posters and other materials.

- Online tutorial that provides a step-by-step description of the start-up process, which can be viewed at www.ncpanet.org/SMMtutorial/smmtutorial.html

- NCPA staff support and peer-to-peer networking and educational opportunities to expand adherence knowledge, counseling and communication skills through Lunch and Learn webinars.

Stick to the Script: new adherence resource for pharmacists

NCPA launched the first phase of a medication adherence resource center site, www.stick2thescript.org that serves as a central repository for provider and patient specific adherence tools and information. The site provides pharmacists and other health care providers with a comprehensive resource of tools, programs, and education to use with patients to help them understand the goals and outcomes of their prescription regimen, manage their chronic condition(s), and take their medications as directed.
Public Policy
Advocates for Adherence

NCPA launched a full-court press for pharmacists to tackle the problem of non-adherence this year, and was pleased to be joined by so many diverse stakeholders in their respective efforts to improve patient care while lowering overall health care costs. Community pharmacists, recognized as among the most trusted and accessible health care providers, are also uniquely positioned to positively influence adherence due to frequent communications with patients regarding medications. The recognition of community pharmacists as a valued player in the provision of health care solutions was evident from all sectors, from the Surgeon General to national health policy institutes such as NEHI.

This past year, NCPA had the opportunity to participate in a variety of meetings and provide the community pharmacy perspective on the problem of medication adherence and how NCPA members are providing viable solutions. NCPA also responded to several requests from the U.S. Surgeon General’s office and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for ideas on improving the nation’s health.

ADHERENCE IN ACTION

NCPA leadership and members participated in various events and meetings promoting adherence around the country, from a national platform to localized activities described below.

NEHI: ROADMAP TO IMPROVED ADHERENCE MEETING

NEHI convened a meeting in September 2011 which brought together leading experts and policy makers focused on making medication adherence an integral part of the national health reform strategy. NCPA CEO Doug Hoey was invited as an expert panelist and emphasized the importance of including the community pharmacist as a part of the care team. Hoey also highlighted the importance of aligned incentives that are focused on providing quality care to patients that produce improved health outcomes while reducing waste.

Conference panelists (from left): Douglas Hoey, CEO, National Community Pharmacists Association; Dr. William Shrank, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center

NCPA launched a full-court press for pharmacists to tackle the problem of non-adherence. NCPA leadership and members participated in various events and meetings promoting adherence around the country.
The National Consumers League “Script Your Future” is a national multi-year awareness campaign designed to help patients better manage their health by encouraging more open conversations between health care professionals and patients. NCPA is a Committed Partner, helping to create visibility for the NCL initiative. The Birmingham event, which was hosted at Homewood Pharmacy (NCPA member), focused on the important role that all health care professionals, including pharmacists, have in helping patients better adhere to their medication. Birmingham is one of six regional target markets in which the multi-year campaign is piloting interventions, outreach activities, research and advertising. One of the keynote speakers at the event was Alabama Governor, Robert Bentley, who encouraged patients with chronic conditions to speak with their health care professionals about their medications.

Representative Bill Posey (R-FL) visited Hobbs Pharmacy (NCPA member) on Merritt Island, Fla. as host for an event focused around the national medication adherence campaign, Script Your Future. The event allowed seniors to meet with a pharmacist and get personal consultations designed to increase compliance to their medication regimen. NCPA appreciates the attention Congressman Posey has placed on the importance of taking medications appropriately and as prescribed, especially among our nation’s seniors.

NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE: SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE CAMPAIGN KICKOFF IN BIRMINGHAM

ABOVE LEFT | Seated: Alabama Governor Robert Bentley; Ted Debro, Alabama Board Member National Consumers League; Linda Lamberth, Executive Director Alabama Lifespan Respite Resources Network; Kenny Sanders RPh (podium).

ABOVE RIGHT | (left) Representative Bill Posey (R-FL) visits pharmacist-owner Mark Hobbs at Hobbs Pharmacy on Merritt Island, FL. The pharmacy hosted a Script Your Future event and encouraged seniors to take advantage of medication consultations with a pharmacist to improve their adherence.

NATIONAL CONSUMERS LEAGUE: SCRIPT YOUR FUTURE DAY HOSTED BY CONGRESSMAN BILL POSEY
EVERYONE’S TALKING ABOUT ADHERENCE

It’s not always easy to come to consensus on anything in Washington, but if there’s one issue that can rally everyone, improving medication adherence and making it a top public health priority is something we can all agree to. NCPA provided community pharmacy’s feedback to solicitations from CMS and the Surgeon General’s Office on strategies and solutions to boost medication adherence.

Studies have found that higher rates of medication adherence result in significantly fewer hospitalizations and lower health care costs, and that these savings are greater for patients over age 65.

2013 MEDICARE PART C AND PART D DRAFT CALL LETTER: The role of medications, and specifically medication adherence, plays a significant and direct role in the overall cost of health care and should be a key strategy for any effective partnership between Part D plans and ACOs. As ACOs look to collaborate with Part D sponsors with the goal of improved coordination of pharmacy care, NCPA strongly encourages the involvement of community pharmacists to assist with medication adherence. Studies have found that higher rates of medication adherence result in significantly fewer hospitalizations and lower health care costs, and that these savings are greater for patients over age 65.

NCPA commends CMS for its recognition of the benefits of prescription synchronization, not only for beneficiary convenience but more importantly in the provision of better patient care, healthier outcomes, and ultimately lower overall health costs.

CMS NOTES BENEFITS OF MEDICATION SYNCHRONIZATION: NCPA supports CMS’s proposal to implement a program with daily pro-rated patient cost-sharing for the purpose of medication synchronization and for initial fills of a new medication. NCPA commends CMS for its recognition of the benefits of prescription synchronization, not only for beneficiary convenience but more importantly in the provision of better patient care, healthier outcomes, and ultimately lower overall health costs.

NCPA shared with CMS the experiences of its members who have implemented refill synchronization programs, and addressed the issues raised by CMS in the proposed rule. NCPA also noted that community pharmacists around the country have begun offering refill synchronization programs to better coordinate the care of their patients, reduce the potential gaps in therapy, and improve medication adherence.

Based on industry feedback, CMS will delay its proposal to implement a program with a daily prorated patient cost-sharing rate for prescriptions dispensed by a network pharmacy for less than a 30-day supply of certain covered Part D drugs until January 1, 2014.
SURGEON GENERAL’S OFFICE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION ADHERENCE

NCPA responded to a request by the Office of the Surgeon General for information about causes, impact and potential solutions associated with the public health problem of prescription medication non-adherence in adults with chronic conditions. It was an opportunity to showcase interventions community pharmacists have deployed such as Simplify My Meds, to improve medication adherence.

“NCPA is pleased to see the interest from the Surgeon General’s office as it seeks strategies to overcome the critical public health issue of medication adherence, and appreciates the Surgeon General’s support of pharmacists as a critical part of the health care team. Community pharmacists are deeply committed to improving public health. Through their expertise and accessibility, pharmacists are uniquely positioned to positively influence adherence due to frequent communications with patients regarding medications. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Surgeon General’s office to promoting proper medication use and adherence.”

—NCPA’s response to Surgeon General’s Office

MTM AND ADHERENCE ON DISPLAY ON CAPITOL HILL:

NCPA and Mirixa were invited to exhibit at the Population Health Innovations Showcase, hosted by the Care Continuum Alliance. The showcase innovators were selected based on their cutting-edge population health management tools and strategies in support of policy initiatives to improve health outcomes, care quality, and lower costs. The event brought together a bi-partisan group of Members of Congress, many of whom serve on committees of interest to community pharmacy, such as Energy and Commerce and Small Business. NCPA had the opportunity to meet with members of Congress and their staff to discuss solutions pharmacists are providing in the health care delivery system such as medication therapy management (MTM) and adherence services.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the Surgeon General’s office to promoting proper medication use and adherence.
Simplify My Meds...a PAMA program designed to enhance your medication use.

The National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA®) represents the interests of America’s community pharmacists, including the owners of more than 23,000 independent community pharmacies. Together they represent a $93 billion health care marketplace, dispense nearly 40% of all retail prescriptions, and employ more than 315,000 people, including 62,400 pharmacists. Independent community pharmacists are readily accessible medication experts who can help lower health care spending. To learn more go to www.ncpanet.org.

The PAMA program developed by NCPA is supported in part by unrestricted funding from

For more information about the PAMA program contact: adherence@ncpanet.org.