

2002 Accomplishments:

Adult Immunization Coalition:

PSSNY partnered with the NYS DOH on their Adult Immunization Initiative and the Medicaid Asthma Project thereby, raising the profile of pharmacist providers within the DOH. The New York State Island Peer Review (IPRO) and the Centers for Disease Control publicly stated that "pharmacists' are an 'underutilized' profession."

ESAP:

PSSNY supported legislation that authorizes pharmacists to dispense up to 10 syringes and needles without a prescription, as long as your pharmacy is registered with the NYS DOH. Our support for this legislation was solely for its public health implications. Other states that have allowed this have seen intravenous drug user related HIV infections reduced by 50%. This is a volunteer program.

Tobacco Cessation Grant:

PSSNY received a three-year grant contract with the NYS DOH, Office of Chronic Diseases to be funded at \$200,000 per year. This grant pays pharmacists to conduct Tobacco Cessation classes for NYC Medicaid recipients. We submitted four grant proposals, three statewide and one for NYC only. Cessation programs began in November of 2001 and continued through to July, 2002.

Pharmacy Asthma Network:

This program started as a pilot project in the Bronx, NY for Medicaid children suffering from asthma. PSSNY interceded more than two years ago through the Pharmacy Advisory Committee to Medicaid to get reimbursements boosted for spacers, masks and peak flow meters because reimbursement was below a pharmacy's acquisition cost and therefore, less than 3% of Medicaid patients needing these products had them. In addition, PSSNY contracted with a company to provide deep discounts to pharmacies on these products so that the spread would allow pharmacists to get these devices into the hands of these Medicaid patients and to spend time teaching patients how to use them properly. The pilot project was very successful and now PSSNY is moving this network out statewide. PSSNY brought special Asthma Management training to other parts of the state. We asked Medicaid to track these patients brought into the program so that we can measure pharmacists success at reducing costs to Medicaid.

911 Attack on the WTC:

Like so many thousands of others, New York pharmacists responded immediately to the devastating attack on the World Trade Center. Within an hour and a half of the first attack, the NYS Board of Pharmacy granted PSSNY's request to put into place "emergency" practice act rules that authorized pharmacists throughout NYS to dispense up to a three-day supply of

medications without a prescription, to transfer prescription medications from one pharmacy to another without a wholesaler's license and allow out-of-state pharmacists to practice in the state during the crisis. These rules were initially for one week and extended to two weeks upon PSSNY's request. These rules were necessitated by the massive dislocation of individuals from their homes in lower Manhattan and by thousands of rescue workers and National Guardsmen called up in response to the attack. NY Pharmacists responded to stranded travelers at the NYC airports to see if they needed any assistance with their medications. Cell phones were used to communicate back to their pharmacy if assistance was called for. Hundreds of pharmacists gave blood and money to the American Red Cross. PSSNY, with the generous help of our sister state associations, raised \$50,000 for the NYS WTC Relief Fund. PSSNY's e-mail/fax communications system was called upon by the Medicaid program to provide communications to NYC pharmacies concerning an "Emergency Medicaid" assistance program. NYC Medicaid lost its headquarters, computers, phones, etc. in the WTC attack and had to revert to "paper claims."

Mass Immunization/Preparedness Task Force:

PSSNY worked closely with the NYS Department of Health and all county health departments in developing a statewide "Preparedness" plan in the event of any future natural or man-made disasters or terrorist attacks. Pharmacist volunteers were asked by local county health departments to be part of their disaster team. Pharmacy gained strong support among health officials as resources in immunizing the masses and volunteering in the event of an emergency.

2002 Pharmacy Legislation:

- Passed out-of-state pharmacy registration this past session. This brings mail order and Internet pharmacy operations under NYS Board of Pharmacy rules and regulations, as well as, NYS's Controlled Substance laws.
- PSSNY had legislation killed that would have permitted physicians to dispense medications for profit. A company was pushing this legislation that would allow pharmacists to be replaced by a vending machine in a physician's office. This would only impact Upstate New York's rural areas.
- Amended legislation to exempt pharmacies from having to be licensed as DME dealers.
- Defeated massive reimbursement cut proposals early in the 2002 legislative session. Reimbursement cuts to Medicaid, ADAP (HIV/AIDS drugs) and our EPIC (senior Rx program) would have totaled \$238 million annually. Medicaid remained at AWP-10% + \$3.50/\$4.50 as did the ADAP program. Our EPIC program did receive a reimbursement cut from AWP + \$3.00 to AWP-10% + \$3.50/\$4.50. Cuts reduced to \$25 million.