

2003 Accomplishments:

Adult Immunization Coalition:

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

Asthma Initiative:

PSSNY provided funding in concert with Regional Asthma Coalitions to bring the "Rules of Two" Asthma training program to pharmacists throughout New York State.

Medicaid, EPIC & ADAP Budget Cuts:

PSSNY was successful in pushing back devastating reimbursement cuts (AWP-15%) to three (3) major prescription drug programs in New York State. Although pharmacies suffered a decrease in reimbursement, it was significantly less than proposed by the Governor and did not include increases in "co-payments" and the addition of 1.2 million Medicaid Managed Care recipients to co-pay requirements. Most other states did not fair so well.

Price Poster Changes:

The final rules were put in place that eliminated the cumbersome price posters and replaced them with a smaller counter sign and a list if requested by consumers. The object of the changes was to reduce the administrative time it took to keep the old poster systems up to speed and to virtually eliminate fines where pricing did not match the computer.

Out-of-State Registrations Begins:

PSSNY worked long and hard to get the out-of-state registration of drug manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors and pharmacies that ship drugs into New York State.

Patient Counseling Changes:

Counseling regulations were changed that eliminate the need for the pharmacist to ask every patient if they have questions for the pharmacist. Limits "requirement to counsel" to those new patients or patients who are having a new drug therapy added, or their current therapy adjusted for any reason. For those patients receiving refills with no changes, a pharmacy technician or other designee may ask those patients if they have a question for the pharmacist.

Medicaid:

PSSNY continues to fight to get the Medicaid/Medicare crossover initiative operational so that pharmacy does not yet again face debilitating reimbursement cuts. PSSNY is also monitoring Medicaid "down time" and reporting directly to Medicaid department heads. PSSNY continues to participate in the Medicaid Pharmacy Advisory Committee to bring outstanding issues to the forefront.

National:

PSSNY is connected into national pharmacy organizations and continues to play a crucial role in national legislative and regulatory issues.

2003 Pharmacy Legislation:

- Passed "Whistleblower" protection legislation that protects employee pharmacists (working for publicly traded corporations) from retaliation from employers for reporting unsafe conditions for consumers.
- Passed legislation that moved HCG from schedule II to Schedule III.
- Passed legislation to exempt nursing homes from the one Rx per blank rule. Physicians can now use patient orders.
- Passed legislation that would provide for more harsh penalties and greater enforcement against those practicing a profession without a license.
- It was PSSNY's legislative initiative that convinced the Governor's Office and the Legislature to pass enabling legislation to allow the auto-enrollment of Medicare drug transitional payments for 125,000 qualified EPIC enrollees, saving New York State approximately \$65 million and helping PSSNY in its fight to protect current Medicaid and EPIC reimbursements.