Stress Awareness Month
Alcohol Awareness Month
Donate Life Month

The Complex Problem of Opioid Addiction
Front End Fixation: Allergy Season
Open Letter to Congress: NCPA
Keynote speaker Elliot J. Krane, MD, punctured myths about opioids and addiction in an electric, riveting presentation to attendees at the Opening General Session of the 2017 APhA Annual Meeting & Exposition in San Francisco.

“Our reliance on opioids has been said to lead to the opioid ‘epidemic,’” Krane said. “There’s a lot of inflammatory talk, [but] complex problems are usually not going to be solved by simple answers.” He added, “We have people whose lives depend on opioids.” Exposure to opioids alone does not cause addiction, said Krane, a practicing physician and professor of anesthesiology, perioperative, and pain medicine at Stanford University Medical Center. Factors such as genetics and psychiatric illnesses create a predisposition to addiction.

Opioid addiction is inexorably linked to depression, despair, hopelessness, and loss of self-esteem, and the states with the highest addiction rates are not coincidentally the states left behind by economic growth, he said.

“Opioid use goes up with economic despair,” Krane said.

“Strict limits on opioid prescribing are not going to work,” he added, referring to the CDC opioid prescribing guideline. “It’s going to result in inhumane treatment for patients with chronic pain.”

Pharmacists need to be sensitive to recognizing people with addiction when they come in, he said. Every pharmacy should have a take-back program, though that isn’t easy, he added. Krane advocated for increased access to naloxone and a national prescription drug monitoring program.

Rep. Earl L. “Buddy” Carter (R-GA), BSPharm, brought tidings and Capitol Hill humor from Washington, DC, where he serves on the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health. “If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu. Finally, we’re at the table,” he said.

Carter, the only pharmacist in Congress, spoke of the pharmacist provider status legislation making its way through Congress. “We’ve been doing this [pharmacists’ patient care services] for years,” he said. “You need to be recognized and compensated for it.”

He noted that his office was meeting with FDA next week about the possibility of a pharmacist-only class of medications.

APhA President Jean-Venable “Kelly” R. Goode, PharmD, BCPS, FAPhA, FCCP, said, “I challenge each of you to have the courage to seek the new.” About the quest for federal provider status, Goode told attendees, “We will win this battle.”
The First Aid category is a steady performer in independent pharmacy. As news of super lice has spread, non-toxic antiparasitic treatments released have gained traction. A few of these brands include LiceFreee®, Vamousse®, and Lice MD®. Lycelle®, an Rx-to-OTC switch, and Littlebugs™ are pesticide-free products that have entered the market in the last year.

Manufacturers continue to update their packaging to call attention to certain claims. Johnson & Johnson is updating their Band-Aid® packaging to help consumers distinguish between their different bandage lines.

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Opiods: The Complexity of Addiction 2
Front End Fixation: It's Allergy Season 4
April Is: Donate Life Month 8
Stress Awareness Month: 9 Ways To Relief 10
FDA Trends: New Drug for Eczema 14
SDC & BDC Support Congressional Action! 16
Alcohol Awareness Month 18
In more complex categories like upper respiratory and allergy medication with many ailment symptoms, there are most likely a distinct set of brands in each segment of the category that satisfy consumer needs. These needs dictate that a somewhat broader set of brands are required.

It is important to understand consumer loyalty. Do you have the proper selection of brands, forms, sizes and SKUs to keep consumers from leaving the store?

The range of assortment depth can vary by channel based on how shoppers value the depth of assortment. In the grocery channel, allergy products may be more of a convenience purchase and depth of assortment may not be critical. In the drug channel, however, allergy is a destination category where depth of assortment is valued and expected. (Thompson, 2010)

With the wave of brand to OTC switches in the recent years, retail sales in the allergy set have grown significantly. With allergy being a destination category in your stores, make sure that you have the key brands as well as the Good Sense equivalent prominently displayed. Also make sure that you stock appropriate non drug options in your set as add on sales.

Suggested non drug Items:
- Nasal Irrigator / Saline Rinse
- Apple Cider Vinegar
- Local Honey
- Probiotic
- Vaporizer/Humidifier
- Tissues

The amazing amount of advertising done to support OTC allergy sales is significant in driving customers to look to your shelf for their needs. Allegra launched in sync with the start of the allergy season, the aggressive 360 marketing program. This program hit hard on points of difference versus the competition: Faster than Claritin, Non-drowsy vs. Zyrtec and Benadryl.

In 2011, Allegra was the most heavily advertised OTC allergy brand, with expenditures totaling $140.8 million, driving a commanding 45.7% share of voice. Sales hit $273 million in year 1 and continued to grow to exceed $300 million in year 2. (Kline)

As they say, the rising tide lifts all boats. You will benefit from having a comprehensive allergy section in your store. Do not skimp on product offerings! The last thing any of us needs is a consumer not being able to find the preferred product to treat their symptoms.

Smith Drug Company has a comprehensive assortment of allergy relief products to help increase your sales and customer satisfaction. Take a moment to review what you have in your section and ask your Smith Drug representative for advice on what you could/should add.
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<td>ALLEGRA D 12HR TAB 30'S</td>
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<td>NEILMED NAS/SINUS IRRIG SPR</td>
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<td>NEILMED NASABULB ASPIRATOR</td>
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<td>NEILMED NASADOCK PLUS KIT</td>
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<td>NEILMED SINUFLO READY RINSE</td>
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<td>NEILMED SINUS RIN BOT KIT</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
April is National Donate Life Month

Read about how your pharmacy can use free resources and help promote donation during National Donate Life Month!

Visit donatellife.net/celebrations
National Donate Life Month (NDLM) was instituted by Donate Life America and its partnering organizations in 2003. Celebrated in April each year, NDLM features an entire month of local, regional and national activities to help encourage Americans to register as organ, eye and tissue donors and to celebrate those that have saved lives through the gift of donation.

National Donate Life Month 2017
Donate Life America was inspired by the concept of the pinwheel for the 2017 National Donate Life Month artwork. A pinwheel evokes various images and meanings, but the strongest association revolves around opportunity and energy.

The pinwheel is symbolic of an instrument that turns obstacles into opportunities. The pinwheel’s ability to capture and pass on energy parallels one’s potential to make LIFE possible. Each Donate Life pinwheel has four sails supported by one stem, symbolizing the power one person has to be an organ, eye, tissue, or living donor.

For recipients, donation can turn sickness and injury into a second chance at life. For donors, their decision to register can turn a sorrowful time into a source of comfort for family as a result of renewed life for others.

The pinwheel reminds us that we all have the potential to capture and pass on life, comfort and hope to others by registering as a donor. This April, we encourage you to stop to feel the breeze, watch the pinwheels and think of the lives of those touched by donation and transplantation.

We wish you a Happy National Donate Life Month. Thank you for your efforts in educating and registering others as organ, eye and tissue donors!
Everyone feels stressed from time to time. If left unchecked, it tends to be a real joy-killer. This, of course, makes it harder for us to live complaint-free, happy lives. Stress can also lead to a number of major health problems, ranging anywhere from anxiety to severe depression and from mild acne to life-threatening heart attacks, so it is easy to see why it is so vitally important to keep life’s major stressors in check. Since April is National Stress Awareness Month, the best way to celebrate it would be by creating less stress in our own lives. So here is a list of 9 positive ways you can respond to the stress in your life and keep your own stress levels in check.
Make Up Your Mind to Get | Stay Healthy
Taking control of your personal health can make a great difference in the amount of stress you feel. The best way to reclaim control of your life is by taking charge of your body.

Make a Change
It can be as simple as clearing the clutter off your desk or as elaborate as taking a well-deserved vacation, the important thing is that you do something different. Even a small change can make a big difference when it comes to stress.

Focus on Now
Most folks live their entire lives in yesterday or tomorrow. In truth, however, there is only Now. Focusing on this perfect moment, right now, provides a magical escape from the disappointment of what once was and the fear of what might be, and leaves stress stuck in a time warp.

Talk to Yourself
Sometimes a good pep talk is all that is needed to keep stress at bay. Maybe it is high time you gave yourself one by affirming what is right with your life instead of dwelling on what’s wrong.

Get the Giggles
It’s true; laughter really is the best medicine. Watch a funny show or video, tell a funny joke, or go to a card shop and read funny cards. Whatever it takes, give yourself time for laughter each and every day.
**Meditate**
A still mind is a stress-free mind, so take a deep breath, quiet your thoughts and let the stress melt away. Even ten minutes of meditation done daily for the next 30 days will do wonders for releasing stress in your life.

**Keep a Happiness Journal**
Every evening for the next 30 days spend a few minutes reflecting on the day you just experienced and list five things about the day that delighted you.

**Put a Positive Spin on It**
No matter what challenge you may be facing, do your best to think about it positively and then let that new positive mindset become your focal point.

**Help Someone Else**
Sometimes the best way to deal with stress is by providing relief to someone else. Putting your focus on others takes the focus off your own challenges leading to less rumination and stress. So look around you, see who needs a hand up, and then offer yours.
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Jeff Schneider, RPh, VP of Long Term Care Pharmacy Solutions
864.216.2593 • jschneider@smithdrug.com
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today approved Dupixent (dupilumab) injection to treat adults with moderate-to-severe eczema (atopic dermatitis). Dupixent is intended for patients whose eczema is not controlled adequately by topical therapies, or those for whom topical therapies are not advisable. Dupixent can be used with or without topical corticosteroids.

“FDA's approval of Dupixent demonstrates our commitment to approving new and innovative therapies for patients with skin disease,” said Julie Beitz, M.D., director of the Office of Drug Evaluation III in the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. “Eczema can cause significant skin irritation and discomfort for patients, so it is important to have a variety of treatment options available to patients, including those patients whose disease is not controlled by topical therapies.”

Atopic dermatitis, a chronic inflammatory skin disease, is often referred to as “eczema,” which is a general term for several types of inflammation of the skin. Atopic dermatitis is the most common of the many types of eczema; onset typically begins in childhood and can last through adulthood. The cause of atopic dermatitis is a combination of genetic, immune and environmental factors. In atopic dermatitis, the skin develops red, scaly and crusted bumps, which are extremely itchy. Scratching leads to swelling, cracking, “weeping” clear fluid, and finally, coarsening and thickening of the skin.

Dupixent is administered as an injection under the skin. Dupixent’s active ingredient is an antibody (dupilumab) that binds to a protein [interleukin-4 (IL-4) receptor alpha subunit (IL-4Ra)], that causes inflammation. By binding to this protein, Dupixent is able to inhibit the inflammatory response that plays a role in the development of atopic dermatitis.

The safety and efficacy of Dupixent were established in three placebo-controlled clinical trials with a total of 2,119 adult participants with moderate-to-severe atopic dermatitis not adequately controlled by topical medication(s). Overall, participants who received Dupixent achieved greater response, defined as clear or almost clear skin, and experienced a reduction in itch after 16 weeks of treatment.

Dupixent can cause side effects such as serious allergic reactions and eye problems, such as pink eye (conjunctivitis) and inflammation of the cornea (keratitis). If patients experience new or worsening eye symptoms such as redness, itching, pain or visual changes, they should consult a health care provider. The most common side effects include injection site reactions; cold sores in the mouth or on the lips; and eye and eyelid inflammation, including redness, swelling and itching.

The safety and efficacy of Dupixent have not been established in the treatment of asthma. Patients who also have asthma should not adjust or stop their asthma treatment without talking to their physicians.

The FDA granted the application for Dupixent Priority Review and Breakthrough Therapy designation.

The FDA granted the approval of Dupixent to Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

The FDA, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, protects the public health by assuring the safety, effectiveness, and security of human and veterinary drugs, vaccines and other biological products for human use, and medical devices. The Agency also is responsible for the safety and security of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, dietary supplements, products that give off electronic radiation, and for regulating tobacco products.
NEW! Private Label Specialty Supplements

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Smith Drug Company and Burlington Drug Company recently joined with more than 116 other health care groups to endorse bipartisan legislation that would prohibit pharmacy benefit managers from adding retroactive charges on Medicare Part D prescription drugs. The effect of those fees is to raise costs for seniors, taxpayers and pharmacies. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has noted that these direct and indirect remuneration fees affect Medicare beneficiary cost sharing, CMS payments to Part D plans, and pushes patients prematurely into the catastrophic coverage gap. Nearly all catastrophic costs are born by Medicare, and these costs have more than tripled since 2010 to $24 billion. The bills in the House and Senate are The Improving Transparency and Accuracy in Medicare Part D Spending Act, S. 413/H.R. 1038 respectively.

The effort is coordinated by the National Community Pharmacists Association.

For more information on this issue visit:

http://www.ncpanet.org/advocacy/pbm-resources/lack-of-transparency-and-higher-costs/dir-fees/fact-sheet-on-h-r-1038

If you’d like to voice your support for this important legislation visit here:

https://www.votervoice.net/NCPA/campaigns/49980/respond
Sincerely,

legislation.

urge swift Congressional action. We again thank you for

For these reasons, we are proud to endorse S. 413 and

models that reward pharmacies for achieving contractual-

of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to ensure improved

greater transparency while not interfering with the ability

business planning. Furthermore, it successfully achieves

will be for clean claim prescriptions and allow for better

transparency to pharmacy payments by informing

This common-sense legislation would bring greater

transparency to pharmacy payments by informing

pharmacies at the point of sale what their reimbursement

will be for that prescription.

The lack of transparency and the significant lag time in

the pharmacy being notified about these retroactive fees

creates an unnecessary burden on pharmacy operations

and makes it very difficult to make decisions for the

future. Furthermore, the magnitude of these fees often

force pharmacies to make tough decisions to cut back on

community contributions or to reduce employee hours, or

in some cases laying off employees. Such actions have a

ripple effect through local economies.

Moreover, both CMS and MedPAC have raised concerns

over the effects DIR has on patients and the Medicare

program. CMS noted that DIR affects beneficiary cost

sharing, CMS payments to plans and pushes patients

into, and through, the coverage gap sooner. Nearly

all catastrophic costs are born by Medicare and these

costs have more than tripled since 2010. MedPAC, also

raised concerns over Medicare Part D DIR in its 2015

report to Congress. Accounting for these fees at point

of sale protects the integrity of the Medicare program,

ensures beneficiaries are not being overcharged for their

medications, and can potentially lower overall costs as

fewer beneficiaries reach the catastrophic phase.

The diversity of the signatories demonstrates that retroactive

DIR fees adversely impact a broad spectrum of health care

industries and addressing this issue should be a Congressional

priority.

Thank you again for your support on this important piece of

legislation, and we will continue to provide you with periodic

updates as this legislation progresses.

Sincerely,

NCPA Advocacy Center

http://www.ncpa.co/pdf/2017-dir-bill-sig-on-letter-house.pdf

NCPA Press Release:
http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/118-health-care-
groups-support-bills-banning-retroactive-pharmacy-dir-
fees-300431203.html?tc=eml_cleartime

House Of Representatives version:
http://www.ncpa.co/pdf/2017-dir-bill-sig-on-letter-house.pdf

Open Letter To The US Senate

March 28, 2017

Dear Senators Capito, Tester, Boozman, Cotton, Grassley,
Heitkamp, Lankford and Wicker:

We thank you for your leadership in introducing S. 413,
the Improving Transparency and Accuracy in Medicare
Part D Spending Act. This legislation would rein in

retroactive direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees

charged to pharmacies in Medicare Part D.

Retroactive pharmacy DIRs, often assessed weeks or

even months after a prescription has been filled, prevent

pharmacies from knowing at the time of dispensing what

their true reimbursement will be for that prescription.

Moreover, both CMS and MedPAC have raised concerns

over the effects DIR has on patients and the Medicare

program. CMS noted that DIR affects beneficiary cost

sharing, CMS payments to plans and pushes patients

into, and through, the coverage gap sooner. Nearly

all catastrophic costs are born by Medicare and these

costs have more than tripled since 2010. MedPAC, also

raised concerns over Medicare Part D DIR in its 2015

report to Congress. Accounting for these fees at point

of sale protects the integrity of the Medicare program,

ensures beneficiaries are not being overcharged for their

medications, and can potentially lower overall costs as

fewer beneficiaries reach the catastrophic phase.

This common-sense legislation would bring greater

transparency to pharmacy payments by informing

pharmacies at the point of sale what their reimbursement

will be for clean claim prescriptions and allow for better

business planning. Furthermore, it successfully achieves

greater transparency while not interfering with the ability

of pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to ensure improved

pharmacy quality by creating incentive-based payment

models that reward pharmacies for achieving contractual-

based metrics.

For these reasons, we are proud to endorse S. 413 and

urge swift Congressional action. We again thank you for

your leadership in introducing this critically necessary

legislation.

Sincerely,
Each April since 1987, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) has sponsored Alcohol Awareness Month to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma and encourage local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues.

Founded and sponsored by NCADD, Alcohol Awareness Month was established in 1987 to help reduce the stigma so often associated with alcoholism by encouraging communities to reach out to the American public each April with information about alcohol, alcoholism and recovery. Alcoholism is a chronic, progressive disease, genetically predisposed and fatal if untreated. However people can and do recover. In fact, it is estimated that as many as 20 million individuals and family members are living lives in recovery!

Alcohol Awareness Month provides a focused opportunity across America to increase awareness and understanding of alcoholism, its causes, effective treatment and recovery. It is an opportunity to decrease stigma and misunderstandings in order to dismantle the barriers to treatment and recovery, and thus, make seeking help more readily available to those who suffer from this disease.

Each April, NCADD’s National Network of Affiliates and other supporting organizations across the country will use this opportunity to address the Nation’s #1 public health problem through a broad range of media strategies, awareness campaigns, programs and events in their local communities.

With this year’s theme, “Connecting the Dots: Opportunities for Recovery,” the month of April will be filled with local, state, and national events aimed at educating people about the treatment and prevention of alcoholism, particularly among our youth, and the important role that parents can play in giving kids a better understanding of the impact that alcohol can have on their lives. Local NCADD Affiliates as well as schools, colleges, churches, and countless other community organizations will sponsor a host of activities that create The 31st Annual Alcohol Awareness Month.

“Alcohol and drug use is a very risky business for young people,” says Andrew Pucher, President and CEO of NCADD, “and parents can make a difference. The longer children delay drinking and drug use, the less likely they are to develop any problems associated with it. That’s why it is so important to help your child connect the dots and make smart decisions about alcohol and drugs.”
Why Nashville?

• Nashville, Tennessee, will become the new center of the auto and healthcare industries. It’s home to more than 300 healthcare companies and has more than 30,000 jobs in the auto industry.

• The Opryland Gaylord Resort has over 2,800 rooms and 600,000 square feet of meeting space. This sprawling resort has been a must-see Music City landmark and premiere destination for over 35 years. Take Note: One of Opryland’s most impressive sites is indoors: the nine-acre botanical gardens with a four-story waterfall and 1/4 mile-long river.

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• An exclusive Customer Appreciation dinner, with live entertainment!

• Educational discussion panels, led by Smith Drug Company senior staff and industry experts.

• Opportunities for product discounts, exclusive to the Trade Show!

• An excellent opportunity to get face-to-face time with the Smith Drug Company Senior Staff, Consultant Team, company President. We’re here to listen to you.

Mark your calendar! • We personally invite you to become part of the Smith Drug Company family.
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