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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PQC Users Get New Legal Protection for Required Quality Assurance Program

Richmond, VA., August 6, 2009 - As part of Medicare Part D, all plan sponsors and their contracted entities (pharmacies) must have and maintain quality assurance (QA) programs that are designed to reduce medication errors and adverse drug interactions and improve medication use. This requirement is stated in all Part D pharmacy network contracts.

Thousands of Medicare Part D pharmacy providers are meeting their QA requirements and getting legal protection of their quality assurance data with the easy to use, low cost Pharmacy Quality Commitment (PQC) program available through state pharmacy associations. PQC is one program offered by the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS), a federally certified Patient Safety Organization (PSO).

Collecting data on dispensing errors and near-misses is often viewed as a double-edged sword. Fear of discovery and subsequent damage to legal defense cases impeded patient safety data reporting in the past, but now PQC can offer federal protection to data collected and reported.

“Our goal is to make sure that pharmacists in every state can realize the full legal protections afforded to health professionals under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005,” said Rebecca Sned, CEO of APMS. Pharmacists should make sure they are participating in a quality assurance program that offers 100 percent protection of safety, quality and error data. PQC provides valuable insights into trends which pharmacists can use to improve their dispensing processes and decrease the likelihood of costly errors. The PQC program offers a solid continuous quality improvement program and protection for your data, something that most programs do not offer.

About APMS

APMS was established by the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) and is listed as a PSO with the Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ). The mission of APMS is to foster a culture of quality within the profession of pharmacy that promotes a continuous systems analysis to develop best practices that will reduce medication errors, improve medication use and enhance patient care.

Learn more about the programs offered by APMS, visit <http://www.medicationsafety.org>.

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