

Good News Department

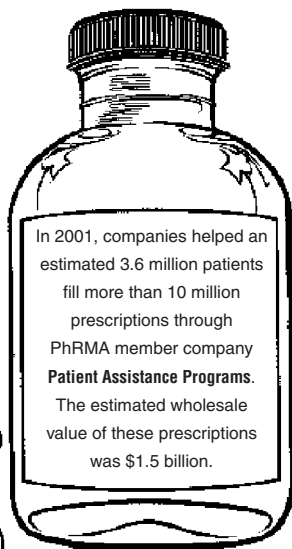
Getting Patients Prescription Medicines They Need

(NAPSA)—A little known health care resource that people should be aware of is the pharmaceutical industry's patient assistance programs. These programs provide prescription drugs free of charge to patients who might not otherwise be able to afford them. These are designed to help low-income individuals who don't have insurance or who don't have enough insurance for prescription drugs, including seniors who don't have prescription drug coverage under Medicare, people who are unemployed, and people whose employers do not offer health insurance.



To make it easier for consumers to find a patient assistance program that fits their individual situations, including the specific medications they need, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) publishes the Directory of Prescription Drug Patient Assistance Programs, which lists programs, the companies that offer them, the medicines available, basic eligibility requirements and contact persons. PhRMA's current directory of patient assistance programs lists 48 company-sponsored programs covering hundreds of medicines.

The pharmaceutical industry has a long tradition of providing prescription drug medicines free of charge to patients who might not otherwise be able to afford



In 2001, companies helped an estimated 3.6 million patients fill more than 10 million prescriptions through PhRMA member company **Patient Assistance Programs**. The estimated wholesale value of these prescriptions was \$1.5 billion.

Patient assistance programs give people access to medications they otherwise couldn't afford.

them. A recent PhRMA survey indicated that company-sponsored patient assistance programs provided prescription medicines to more than 3.5 million patients in 2001, up from 1.1 million patients in 1997. Almost 10 million prescriptions were filled last year, up from about two million prescriptions five years ago. The wholesale value of these products is about \$1.5 billion, compared to \$374 million in 1997.

Consumers can download a free copy of the directory from PhRMA's Web site at www.phrma.org. Also on the Web site are many of the application forms for these programs.