



spotlight on health

Innovative Medicines: Saving Lives

(NAPSA)—There is good news about health in America today: Significant progress is being made against a host of diseases and some important battles have been won. For example, diseases once thought untreatable—HIV/AIDS, heart disease and some forms of cancer—can today increasingly be managed as chronic conditions, letting people live longer, healthier and more productive lives.

Consider these statistics: In a little over half a century, life expectancy in the U.S. has increased by nearly a decade and continues to rise, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Striking progress has been made against a number of potentially fatal conditions.

HIV/AIDS deaths fell by over 70 percent in 15 years. Heart disease death rates in America dropped more than 34 percent in a decade. Since 1980, life expectancy rates for cancer patients have increased by about three years—and 83 percent of those gains are due to new treatments, including medicines.

With more than 2,900 promising compounds in development, millions of people have great reason to hope for future advances.

This progress in treating and managing disease reflects an unprecedented investment in medical innovation. Last year alone, America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies invested a record \$65.3 billion in R&D. Every prescription drug used to help prevent and treat disease is the result of a time-consuming, expensive and risky process of discovery and innovation. It costs, on average, \$1.2 billion and can take anywhere from 10 to 15 years to bring a new, potentially lifesaving



The amazing progress made in treating and managing diseases lately comes from the dedication of thousands of researchers racing against the clock in laboratories around the country.

medicine all the way from a biopharmaceutical research laboratory to a pharmacy shelf.

What's more, out of the tens of thousands of potential medicines studied in the research lab at the start of the discovery process, only a handful will ever be approved for patient use. Medical innovation in America has been successful because companies have been willing to make the necessary investments and take the necessary risks.

These efforts also have a profound impact on the U.S. economy. A recent report shows that the biopharmaceutical sector employs nearly 700,000 workers in the U.S. and every one of them supports 3.7 jobs in other sectors.

Continued medical progress and preservation of high-quality American jobs, however, can be realized only if policymakers support the critical work that innovators do every day to help improve the health of patients, according to many economists.

For more information, visit www.PhRMA.org and www.Innovation.org.