NACDS Pharmacy and Technology Conference Focuses on Reform

Chairman Giancamilli Renews Commitment to Innovation - Former NACDS Staff Member Len DeMino, RPh Recognized

Alexandria, VA (Vocus) August 11, 2009 -- This year's National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) Pharmacy and Technology Conference taking place this week in Boston, Massachusetts has focused extensively on the healthcare reform debate. During the 52nd annual Conference, experts in pharmacy, healthcare, government and economics are conducting in-depth presentations on the current situation, and the role of pharmacy in a "reformed" future.

As part of the first Business Program of the Conference on Sunday, NACDS Chairman of the Board Andy Giancamilli, Chief Executive Office for Katz Group North America, including Snyders Drug Stores in the U.S. and Rexall Pharma Plus in Canada, called for policymakers to recognize that pharmacy is in a continuous state of healthcare reform through the innovations that it brings about. He also encouraged attendees to commit to further innovation in the face of the current economic conditions.

Pharmacy's future - one which fully integrates electronic-prescribing, electronic health record management, medication therapy management (MTM), and health and wellness solutions - was illustrated throughout Giancamilli's speech.

"So, today I ask you: what is your moon, and what are you doing to reach it?" Giancamilli asked, referencing President Kennedy's inspirational speech in 1961 calling for a manned lunar landing and successful return to earth before the decade's end.

"I ask this question out of a burning desire to see pharmacy achieve its full potential, for the ultimate benefit of the public. And I admit a little self interest as well, because a rising tide indeed lifts all boats. And there is another reason I want to speak about innovation. It is to deliver a strong message to Washington, D.C. and to the state capitals. The profession and the industry of pharmacy that I know is one that is all about innovation, and that should be empowered to help deliver the accessible, affordable, high-quality, patient-centric care that they are pursuing.

"In my view, pharmacy, researchers, manufacturers, and related industries have been in the improvement business since birth. And through healthy competition, appropriate collaboration, and always a focus on making peoples' lives better, this trajectory of improvement has given us transformational reform."

Also sharing perspectives on healthcare reform on Sunday was former United States Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), a political veteran and national policy expert on healthcare. Sen. Daschle provided a healthcare reform reality check, and an informative glimpse into the world of the legislative process and the process surrounding President Barack Obama's and Congress' goal of reforming our healthcare system. Daschle's remarks generated local media coverage about the healthcare reform debate. Click here to view the news segment on New England Cable News.
On Saturday, August 8, NACDS arranged the innovative "Meet the Rx Market" sessions, where hundreds of pharmacy-related retailers and suppliers met for a series of pre-arranged, 8-minute-long, introductory appointments to discuss new healthcare products, innovations and services. More than 80 different suppliers participated this year - potentially creating hundreds of new business partnerships for NACDS members.

NACDS also arranged 21 unique Continuing Education (CE) sessions for Conference attendees that will focus on pharmacy's future and the industry's emerging topics and issues - including pharmacy reimbursement rates, generics utilization, medication adherence, the role of pharmacy, and medication management.

In addition to the business and education programming, former NACDS vice president of pharmacy affairs Leonard J. DeMino, RPh, was honored with the UCB Leadership in Pharmacy Award. DeMino's leadership and actions over his more than 50-year career in pharmacy were recognized by his fellow pharmacy colleagues. UCB, Inc., which sponsored the award, will make a contribution in the amount of $10,000 in DeMino's name to the NACDS Foundation - continuing his legacy and again serving the greater good of the future of pharmacy and patient care.

For a copy of Giancamilli's prepared remarks, please click here.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) represents traditional drug stores, supermarkets, and mass merchants with pharmacies. Its more than 160 chain member companies include regional chains with a minimum of four stores to national companies. NACDS members also include more than 1,000 suppliers of pharmacy and front-end products, and 85 international members representing 28 countries. Chains operate 39,000 pharmacies, and employ a total of more than 2.5 million employees, including 118,000 pharmacists. They fill more than 2.5 billion prescriptions yearly, and have annual sales of over $750 billion. For more information about NACDS, visit www.NACDS.org.

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