

Health Care *News and Notes*

Don't Take Your Medicine For Granted

(NAPSA)—The pipeline of new lifesaving medicines could be put at risk by quick-fix solutions such as importing drugs from Canada, say experts from the Missouri Pharmacy Association.

The connection, experts say, is that costly research and development of new drugs is borne almost exclusively by pharmaceutical companies, funded by the sale of their products. When these sales are circumvented, so is the revenue stream for new medicines.

"We shouldn't take the existence of lifesaving drugs for granted," says the Association's president, Matt Hartwig. "People are living much longer in the U.S. compared to previous generations, in part because of new medicines. Scourges like diabetes and cancer remind us that there is much more for medicine to do. That's why it is crucial that, in addition to exercise and a healthy diet, there be a vigorous campaign to develop new lifesaving medicines."

According to experts at Glaxo-SmithKline, a partner in a new public education campaign aimed at helping people take their medicines properly, it costs more than \$800 million for research and development of a single new drug. The odds of success for new drugs are daunting: Only one out of a 1,000,000 compounds screened ever makes it to a patient.

Many Americans believe the government pays for the majority of drug research. In fact, government agencies fund only a tiny fraction of new pharmaceutical research. It is American consumers, through their prescription purchases, who help drug



The future of the pharmaceutical industry may be in your hands.

companies pay for research and development.

Industry experts believe the development of new drugs is a burden that's worth shouldering. The progress of the past century, marked by new medical treatments, could halt and even roll backward without a full pipeline of new medicines to meet tomorrow's future health care needs.

"We can't ignore the fact that many people want to take their medicines as prescribed but can't afford them or simply have difficulty paying for the medicines they need," Hartwig says. "That's why we are pointing consumers to an array of drug savings programs that can help eligible patients get free or reduced-price medicines."

Visit www.valueofmedicines-mo.com to learn more.