



spotlight on health care

Get Help Getting Your Prescription Medications

(NAPSA)—While prescription drugs can improve and prolong life, too many people fail to take their medicines as prescribed. According to the National Institutes of Health, such noncompliance is an important predictor of emergency room visits and hospital admissions, yet millions of people with chronic conditions are not getting the medication they need because they do not have health insurance coverage or are struggling financially.

Fortunately, America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies lend a helping hand. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA) is a nationwide effort to help uninsured and financially struggling Americans connect with patient assistance programs that provide medicines at low or even no cost. PPA—which just celebrated its fifth anniversary—recently passed a major milestone, assisting more than 6.5 million people.

Making things even easier, said Billy Tauzin, president and CEO of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), is PPA's effort to "use the latest technology available to ensure those who need help can get it." PPA now has a text hotline and smart phone application to ensure 24/7 access to information about the more than 475 participating programs. These new features give health care providers, patient advocates and patients even better access to information about participating patient assistance programs.

People who qualify may have access to more than 2,500 brand-name and generic prescription medicines. In addition, the PPA provides information on over 10,000 free clinics. It has connected more than 300,000 people with clinics and health care providers.



Pharmaceutical research companies have new, high-tech ways to help people who can't afford needed medicine get information about programs that provide medicines free or nearly free.

More than 133 million Americans suffer from at least one chronic disease, which cause seven out of 10 deaths in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Too many are struggling financially and the numbers of those losing health care benefits may continue to rise," Tauzin said. "This can be a scary time, especially considering the prevalence of chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes and asthma."

Helping spread the word is former "Leave it to Beaver" star and PPA spokesman Jerry Mathers. "I've been urging people to pick up the phone, log on to the website to see if they qualify for assistance," he said. "As a patient who must cope with diabetes, I understand only too well the importance of access to the medicine you need."

Anyone needing help with medicines can call (888) 4-PPA-NOW to talk to a trained operator or go to www.pparx.org. It takes only 10 to 15 minutes to find out if you qualify for free or nearly free medications.