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PHARMACEUTICAL EFFECTS ON DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER ADS

Contributed by Willis, Inc.

With relaxation of the FDA regulations on advertising, pharmaceutical companies no longer exclusively market to physicians. Last year, they spent more than \$1 billion on advertising directed at consumers.

A survey published in the *Prevention* magazine revealed this trend has resulted in approximately 21 million consumers talking to their physicians about medical conditions which they had never talked about.. Additionally, 53 million consumers talked with their physicians about a drug seen in advertisements.

According to the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), direct-to-consumer advertising helps meet the

demand for information about health conditions and possible treatments.

Not everyone agrees. A poll conducted by IMS Health, a pharmaceutical industry research group, showed 64 percent of the nation's physicians want a decrease in direct-to-consumer advertising. Fifty-three percent (53%) saw an increase in the number of requests for brand name drugs because of advertisements.

"The challenge is when patients have expectations for treatment based on poor or suspect information," said Matthew F. Hollon, MD, of the department of medicine at the University of Washington in Seattle. "In the interest of time and patient satisfac-

tion, physicians often defer to the patient's expectations."

According to FDA regulations, print and television advertising must prominently present all major risks associated with the product along with its health benefits. The FDA is closely monitoring pharmaceutical advertising, which has resulted in citations being issued to ten drug makers for violating FDA advertising guidelines.

Currently, employers are combating rising costs by increasing prescription co-pays or going to three levels of co-pays. Other options include generic drug promotions, as well as educating consumers how pharmaceutical costs affect their health plan.

NEW FEDERAL REGULATIONS IMPACT HOSPITALS

Contributed by SESCO Management Consultants

Federal agencies continue to issue regulations and rulings, which impact hospitals. For example, the office of federal contract compliance programs (OFCCP) has taken the position that hospitals with a Blue Cross/Blue Shield contract in excess of \$50,000 to treat federal employees are considered a federal contractor and required to prepare an affirmative action plan.

The U. S. Department of Health & Human Services

recently issued final regulations protecting the privacy of individually identifiable health records. OSHA has issued its final ergonomic standard dealing with "musculoskeletal disorders" in the workplace.

To assist members with these kinds of human resource issues, THA has retained the services of SESCO Management Consultants, one of the nation's oldest management consulting firms.

Whether it is to discuss a difficult employee relations

problem, successfully stop a union organizing drive, or help handle a federal investigation or discrimination charge, organizations will have priority service from a staff of professionals. SESCO also provides analysis and review of personnel policies, work rules and employee handbooks.

SESCO staff may be reached at 423/764-4127, www.sescomgt.com.

FREEMANWHITE

Contributed by FreemanWhite Architects.

What sets FreemanWhite apart from ordinary healthcare design firms? Its emphasis is on analyzing and defining the most efficient ways to operate facilities.

Incorporated in North Carolina, FreemanWhite is a 180-person, professional services firm. It has been serving clients since 1892. Its longevity is due to constant innovation and responsive client service. The firm has designed

facilities with a total construction value of over \$2.8 billion.

Healthcare design has been the firm's emphasis since the 1950's. Currently, FreemanWhite works with healthcare clients across the country on a range of master planning, operational analysis, design consulting, planning, architectural, and engineering projects.

There are few industries more complex than health care and few firms that have the resources, technology and expertise to

navigate this rapidly changing market.

FreemanWhite has been a leader in the healthcare field for over 50 years. Its project success comes from integrating the client into the entire analysis, design and documentation process. Cutting edge technology is used to facilitate caregiver input. At FreemanWhite, they recognize that a successful project must have the client at the center of the design team.

THE BABY AND BATH WATER

Contributed by Russell Montgomery & Associates

Over the past two decades, the healthcare field has endured tremendous change. When one looks at the future, the conclusion is that the change will continue. For many in the healthcare field, this amount of change was not anticipated when they entered their profession.

As Russell, Montgomery & Associates works with healthcare and hospital professionals in career transition, a significant number is working to change from a hospital or even healthcare setting.

They feel the environment no longer is what they find enjoyable. Much of the motivation for these feelings is evoked in what is perceived as a uniquely healthcare industry problem – rapid change.

The firm works with a variety of people from a broad band of industries. Many are frustrated with the changing environment and desire to move to any industry that they feel offers more promise and stability.

The reality is that change is now a function of the economy as a whole. No one can escape a

career that will have change; people must instead learn to manage that change.

To move from health care to another field to avoid change is very much like throwing the baby out with the bath water. If people have an interest in health care, they should stay the course and live with change.

MEDICAL WASTE COMPLIANCE

Contributed by Medical Waste, Inc.

Due to stringent regulations placed on medical waste disposal, large numbers of healthcare facilities have chosen to contract independent businesses for these services.

Medical Waste, Inc. takes pride in providing safe, environmentally responsible medical waste disposal for businesses in Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia.

MWI provides clients with the highest quality containers, arranges

pick-up schedules according to individual needs, and disposes of the waste through environmentally responsible methods.

In compliance with OSHA regulations, MWI provides a written record of disposal on a regular basis. The company also offers on-site OSHA-compliant training for handling waste, as well as a disposal manual that includes information about the types of medical waste acceptable for disposal, safety regulations for

bloodborne pathogens and an exposure control plan.

Not only does Medical Waste, Inc. take care of waste disposal in a safe, efficient and cost-effective manner, but also relieves the burden of keeping up with ever-changing state and federal regulations.

For more information contact, Amanda Moore at 800-442-0855, moore@wingnet.net.