



NEW SURVEY SHOWS PATIENTS OPPOSE “PRESCRIPTION-ONLY” LAWS FOR SOME COMMON MEDICATIONS

AAFA Poll Finds Patients Already Have Many Healthcare Challenges

Washington, DC – February 22, 2013) The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is out with a new poll re-confirming what AAFA already learned from a previous study and from 60 years of continual nonprofit service to the asthma and allergy community: patients nationwide strongly oppose proposed laws to change popular over-the-counter (OTC) medications to prescription-only (Rx) status.

The new poll was conducted online by Harris Interactive in January 2013, among over 2,000 U.S. adults who personally suffered from asthma, allergies, cold, cough or flu in the preceding 12 months and who purchased non-prescription medications for at least one condition during that time.

More than 45 million Americans have nasal allergies, more than 22 million have asthma and over 10 million have both. Respiratory diseases take a devastating toll on public health, costing billions of dollars in direct medical expenses, reducing quality of life, lowering workplace and school performance, and can even be life-threatening to high-risk populations, such as asthma patients.

That’s why so many families rely on quick and affordable access to effective FDA-approved OTC and Rx medications for controlling symptoms of these diseases. “It’s easy for AAFA to be on the patients’ side of this issue,” says Charlotte Collins, AAFA’s Vice President of Policy & Programs. “The data shows us that patients already deal with the burdens of these chronic diseases, so adding restrictions on top of the burdens they already face would be a real problem. And they feel the best way to stop criminals involved in the illegal meth trade is through law enforcement and other proven methods, not by doctors’ prescriptions.”

“This is just common sense,” Collins continued. “Meth crimes are serious, with sometimes tragic outcomes, but doctors are not substitutes for police, and patients should not be penalized for crimes by meth makers.”

Creating More Burdens for Patients Is the Wrong Approach

Over 18 million households in the U.S. depend on OTC medicines containing pseudoephedrine (PSE) to relieve their common symptoms, but direct and immediate access to these medications for patients continues to be threatened by some states looking at requiring prescriptions as a way to stop illegal meth makers. Now, patients are speaking up to let policy makers know that this is not the right solution. In recent years, policymakers in a number of states have proposed Rx-only laws that were eventually defeated in large part because patients and families are overwhelmingly opposed them.

Following AAFA’s first poll in 2010 showing that the majority of asthma, allergy, cold and flu patients opposed changing popular OTC medications to Rx status, the nonprofit patient



organization worked with Harris Interactive to conduct a 2013 follow-up study to look more into the burdens that patients face. The results show that a clear majority (62%) of patients are opposed to Rx-only restrictions. Additionally, AAFA's 2013 study looked beyond the original set of questions asked in 2010 to gain a better understanding of burdens patients currently face and how those burdens would be impacted by a PSE prescription requirement.

Survey results show that patients already face costs and burdens associated with treating their common symptoms.

- Two-thirds of patients (64%) say they are managing medications for 2 or more people in their household
- Patient households deal with allergy symptoms for more than 2 months per year (69.5 days on average)
- Only 1-in-5 patients can get in to see their doctor the same day, with nearly one quarter (22%) having to wait more than a week to get an appointment
- Patients say that two in five (42%) of their visits to the doctor require time off work, with one-third (31%) saying that their doctor visits always take place during their work hours
- When including drive time, waiting-room time and the visit itself, only 1-in-5 patients surveyed spend less than an hour when visiting the doctor, with nearly one-third (30%) returning 2 or more hours per visit; one-in-ten (9%) require 3 or more hours per visit
- The majority of patients surveyed (59%) spend at least \$20 per doctor visit, plus 4-out-of-5 of them (82%) are also paying to fill prescriptions frequently or occasionally for themselves or family members

AAFA has posted more information online for the public and policymakers at www.aafa.org/pse so people can learn what to do in their own states to fight meth while also preserving access to OTC medications.

"Patients are really concerned about extreme local laws that limit their freedom to access meds," says Collins. "AAFA is working with patients nationwide to teach lawmakers about better solutions. We want to make sure that the patient voice is heard."

About the Survey

AAFA's National Pseudoephedrine (PSE) Awareness Study was conducted online between January 4 – 15, 2013 among 2,020 U.S. adults age 18+ who personally suffered from asthma, allergies, cold, cough or flu in the preceding 12 months and purchased non-prescription medications for at least one condition during that time. The poll was conducted for AAFA by Harris Interactive, supported by a grant from the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA). The study used Harris Interactive's proprietary propensity weighting to ensure the online sample reflects general population trends.



About AAFA

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), a not-for-profit organization founded in 1953, is the leading patient organization for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions. AAFA is dedicated to improving the quality of life for patients through education, advocacy and research. AAFA provides practical information, community based services and support through a network of regional chapters, support groups and other local partners around the United States. For more information, visit www.aafa.org.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our North American, European, and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us – and our clients – stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.