



Pharmacy Foundation
of California

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**Pharmacy Foundation of California and iGuard.org Partner
to Increase Medication Safety Information for Community**

SACRAMENTO, CA – February 4, 2010 – The Pharmacy Foundation of California (PFC) and iGuard.org proudly announce their partnership designed to increase patients’ knowledge about the medications they take through a free Web-based drug safety monitoring service. The Foundation will present the service under the brand name, SafeMedService.org. This new service, powered by iGuard.org, offers personalized drug safety reports, timely safety alerts, and product recall information by utilizing feeds from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and major drug manufacturers.

The Sacramento based Pharmacy Foundation of California recognizes the need to provide consumers with personalized information about the medications they take. “The trend we’re seeing is that our healthcare system increasingly provides consumers with more and more medications to use at home *without* also providing the tools, information, and ongoing monitoring that patients need to safely use them,” said Dr. Michael Negrete, Pharmacy Foundation of California CEO. “This service is a valuable tool that patients and family caregivers can use to help ensure the safety of their therapies.”

Empowering the Community with Personalized Information

Starting on February 5, consumers taking medications, and their caregivers will have access to this free service through the web site <http://www.safemedservice.org>. PFC joins The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) as the second consumer advocacy group concentrated on medication safety to partner with iGuard.org.

The iGuard.org Service

Founded by drug safety researchers in October 2007, iGuard.org is committed to improving medication safety by providing over two million Americans with the information they need to take more a more active role in their own health care. This collaboration creates a separate service, safemedservice.org, promoted by PFC and powered by the popular iGuard.org safe medication tool. Other organizations will also have the ability to utilize the SafeMedService by offering it to their members, subscribers, and employees. The service provides real-time information, including drug interactions and recalls, to its more than two million members.

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"We are honored and excited to be working with such a prestigious organization as The Pharmacy Foundation of California, which has been providing superior services to pharmacists and consumers in California for over 33 years," says Dr. Hugo Stephenson, president of iGuard.org. "The Foundation's SafeMedService.org will provide consumers immediate, customized information about the medications they take. This is a new paradigm for educating patients and empowering them to play a more active role in their own health care decision-making."

How it Works

Consumers taking medications can go directly to www.safemedservice.org and register with a simple 60 second, three-step process. After SafeMedService patients register, they will receive a personalized safety report that checks medications for potential side effects, treatment duplications and drug-drug/drug-disease interactions. Through their e-mail, patients will receive clinically reviewed safety alerts and recalls that emerge from listed medications.

SafetMedService.org (powered by iGuard) Provides a Signature Drug Information Service

While patients today have access to an enormous set of tools for getting information about their health, the iGuard.org medication tool is the only one of its kind that:

- helps patients identify which drugs pose the greatest risk using a personalized, color-coded, drug safety rating system;
- detects potential interactions between drugs and diseases as well as interactions between drugs – recognizing that drug-disease interactions (e.g., Viagra and heart disease, birth control pills and smoking) are the highest cause of death and disability associated with medication use;
- communicates emerging product recalls (which outnumber alerts by four to one) as well as safety notifications and FDA advisories;
- avoids bombarding patients with irrelevant communications by ensuring that drug-specific messages are sent only to those users to whom they apply;
- ensures that communications are actionable and easy to understand by having a pharmacist review and update FDA / drug company alerts for the consumer audience;
- allows patients to have their doctor copied on their communications;
- is funded by medical research, not by advertising, which helps improve medicines.

Helping the Scientific Community

iGuard.org connects patients with researchers interested in learning more about how drugs work. iGuard.org has already helped researchers to document real world rates of side effects for common medications such as statins and antidepressants, and to discover potential interactions between prescription and over-the-counter medications. "Connecting real patients in the real world with drug researchers allows us to learn about medicines much faster," Dr. Stephenson said.

About The Pharmacy Foundation of California

The Pharmacy Foundation of California is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), public benefit corporation, and was founded in 1977 as the California Pharmacists Association Educational Foundation. The organization changed its name in 2004 to better reflect the organization's updated mission of serving the pharmacy-related needs of the California public. Much of the Foundation's efforts now focus on working to ensure that patients and caregivers receive the information, tools and support they need to safely use their medications.

About iGuard.org

iGuard.org, headquartered in Princeton, N.J., is a free and secure source of information for registered users who want to get informed, stay informed and share feedback about their medications. It has received critical support from patient advocacy groups concerned by the large number of patients affected by serious, preventable adverse drug interactions. It offers balanced and timely information to help patients manage their healthcare for themselves or loved ones. Registration is free online at iGuard.org, or through its partners including the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (www.ismp.org), participating e-prescribing physicians (www.allscripts.com) and Kerr Drug (www.kerrdrug.com).

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