

NABP Purchases AWA_R_XE Consumer Protection Program

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Topics:

Association Seeks to Educate about Rogue Web Sites Selling Prescription Drugs and Other Safety Issues in Pharmacy

Earlier this year, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy[®] (NABP[®]) was introduced to the AWA_R_XE campaign, which was created and implemented by the Minnesota Pharmacists Foundation in 2007. Moved by the power of the campaign, NABP obtained the AWA_R_XE program so that its message could be shared on a national level.

The Foundation was inspired to create the AWA_R_XE campaign after hearing of the tragic death of 24-year-old Justin Pearson from an accidental mixed drug overdose. Pearson, who was a resident of St Cloud, MN, ordered the prescription drugs that lead to his death from an illicit online pharmacy that did not require a valid prescription. The drugs were dispensed from pharmacies around the country, including at least one in Minnesota.

“NABP has heard too many stories like Justin’s,” said William T. Winsley, MS, RPh, NABP president, “and when the Foundation approached us about taking the AWA_R_XE campaign national we knew we had been presented with an excellent opportunity to help save others from having a similar story. Using the AWA_R_XE consumer protection program as a vehicle, NABP aims to educate and raise public awareness about rogue Internet drug outlets, counterfeit medications, and prescription drug abuse, among other serious issues.”

Since the program was launched by the Foundation, AWA_R_XE has brought information about illegal drug sites and counterfeit medicines to the public through a dynamic Web site, YouTube videos, and

media outreach. AWA_R_XE information is targeted to teens as well as adults. In addition to raising awareness about the dangers of abusing medications, AWA_R_XE provides medication safety information and encourages the public to rely on pharmacists for information on Internet pharmacies and counterfeit medications. The program has also partnered with D.A.R.E. to create training materials and public workshops.

In the future, NABP will work with the Foundation and other stakeholders to expand this public protection program to raise awareness about other issues affecting the public health, as well as pharmacists’ important role in patient care. The program’s Web site, WWW.AWARERX.ORG, will continue to be the primary vehicle for delivering the AWA_R_XE message as NABP expands the program to a national level. As NABP further develops the program, the Association will also be providing the state boards of pharmacy and other pharmacy organizations the opportunity to use the AWA_R_XE tools.

More information on the AWA_R_XE consumer protection program is available at WWW.AWARERX.ORG.