

July 28, 2011

Consumer Federation of the Southeast Lauds Industry Efforts to Reduce Prescription Drug Abuse

~CFSE commends Florida for being a national leader~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. –The [Consumer Federation of the Southeast](#) (CFSE) today praised efforts within the pharmaceutical industry to crack down on widespread prescription drug abuse. Following the implementation of Florida's new laws to crack down on pill mills, CFSE Executive Director [Walter Dartland](#) also recognized Florida Governor Rick Scott, Attorney General Pam Bondi and state lawmakers as national leaders in the fight against the nationwide epidemic of prescription drug abuse. A [new Florida law](#) intends to shut down pill mills by increasing penalties for overprescribing controlled substances and provides \$3 million to support the continued efforts of state and local law enforcement.

"The widespread abuse of prescription drugs is a serious problem facing communities throughout the southeastern United States," said Dartland. "Health providers can be important partners in helping reduce the spread of abuse while ensuring the legitimate health needs of consumers and patients are met."

Dartland also added that, "creative solutions that benefit consumers and patient care, such as compound pharmacies, are part of positive new evolutions in health care."

He urged more health care providers to take additional steps to reduce prescription drug abuse by using innovative techniques in pain management as alternatives to prescribing highly addictive pain medication.

One such company, Compound Care Pharmacy, based in Alabama, is meeting its patients' needs by formulating customized medications tailored to meet each individual's unique characteristics. In an effort to reduce dependence on highly addictive medications such as Oxycontin, Percocet and Vicodin, in appropriate cases, the company is customizing prescriptions in a topical form instead of pill form.

"As a provider of compounded medication and prescription drugs to many patients, we are sensitive to the widespread abuse of prescription drugs and are working to offer a range of treatment options that meet our patients' unique needs," said Ashley Hammond, R.Ph., owner, president and supervising pharmacist of Compound Care Pharmacy. "The flexibility provided to our patients through Compound Care is a model more pharmacies can use to improve the delivery of prescription drugs and help reduce abuse around the nation."

There are only a handful of compound pharmacies that have received a seal of accreditation from the [Pharmacy Compounding Accreditation Board](#) – which administers a new system of standards created by some of the leading organizations in pharmacy. Compounded medications are prescriptions that are written by physicians and other legally authorized prescribers and prepared for an individual patient by a specially trained pharmacist.

“Compounding medications have been a very useful addition to our practice. Not only does it allow us to combine medications we know will be effective, it delivers them directly to the site with much fewer side effects and drug interactions,” said J. Michael Burdine, MD., founder of The Spine Diagnostic & Treatment Center in Louisiana. “There is a broader margin of patient safety and I have never seen a reported case of diversion of compounded preparations.”

Compound prescriptions are provided to children who need smaller doses of medicine, to patients who cannot tolerate certain ingredients in manufactured medicines or to seniors who metabolize medications differently.

[Prescription drug abuse is the nation's fastest-growing drug problem](#) according to the [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#). The report also emphasizes the need for policies that “strike a balance between our desire to minimize abuse of prescription drugs and the need to ensure access for their legitimate use.”

Like Florida, Ohio has recently strengthened laws to prevent and reduce prescription drug abuse. A new law, [HB 93](#), increases the state's oversight of physicians who prescribe addictive, insurer-paid drugs. The bill includes stringent license requirements for pain clinics, fines for clinics operating improperly of up to \$5,000, fines for doctors providing improper care of up to \$20,000 and requires clinic job applicants to pass a criminal background check.

The CFSE urges consumers to educate themselves about viable options, such as compound pharmacies, when in need of prescription pain medications and they should ensure the provider is fully accredited. For more information about accredited compound pharmacies, please visit www.pcab.info.

The [Consumer Federation of the Southeast](#) is a not-for-profit consumer advocacy group founded in 2003 and is dedicated to consumer advocacy in the southeastern United States. CFSE's goal is to establish a vigorous, new, pro-consumer agenda built upon public awareness, consumer education and coalition-building.