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## Sale of tobacco products in pharmacies

Zellmer's editorial<sup>1</sup> on smoking performs a service to the profession by calling attention to the American Medical Association House of Delegates' recently adopted policy urging pharmacists to remove tobacco products from their shelves and calling for pharmacy organizations to adopt a similar policy. However, his statement that "groups that represent community pharmacists and pharmacies need to overcome the meekness that to date has characterized their efforts to persuade drugstores to discontinue the sale of tobacco" is off the mark and unfortunately dismisses several important efforts that have taken place over more than two decades.

Although APhA commends ASHP for its decision to ask its delegates to consider a similar policy next June, it should be recognized that the APhA House of Delegates adopted a policy to discourage tobacco sales in pharmacies nearly 20 years ago—in 1969. To implement an even earlier policy (1968), APhA over the ensuing years has made available two versions of a sign for pharmacists to use to inform their patients of their policy of not selling tobacco products. Further, the growing number of members who have taken such action has been regularly publicized in APhA publications.

Other APhA policies on smoking have urged that the public be educated about the dangers of smoking (1964, 1968, 1970, and 1971), while another banned smoking at all APhA public meetings (1973). In addition, in January 1987 APhA's headquarters in Washington, D.C., became a smoking-free building, an action that ASHP will take next year.

APhA, in cooperation with the National Cancer Institute, is currently involved in a major public education program, "Helping Smokers Quit," that provides pharmacists with educational materials to assist their patients in smoking cessation. This program, launched in 1986 at a news conference at APhA headquarters featuring U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, soon will be expanded to include educational efforts by the 74 chapters of the APhA Academy of Students of Pharmacy.

Although the profession never should consider our collective efforts to combat smoking to be optimal until this public health hazard is totally eliminated, we nevertheless should not ignore or minimize the substantial efforts that have been made to date.

1. Zellmer WA. Smoking. *Am J Hosp Pharm.* 1988; 45:317. Editorial.

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I wish to congratulate Zellmer on the leadership he demonstrated in urging the pharmacy profession to become more visible in the campaign for a tobacco-free society. The Canadian Pharmaceutical Association

(CPhA) has been actively involved in the issue of the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies since 1984. At that time, we, along with the Department of Health and Welfare Canada, initiated the "Stand Up and Be Counted" program in which we called upon all community pharmacists to re-evaluate their sale and marketing of tobacco products. We urged them to join the program at one of three levels.

At level I, the pharmacist makes a commitment to promote a smoke-free generation by displaying posters and distributing brochures on the subject. More motivated pharmacists can participate at level II, in which they pledge not to display tobacco items or promotional materials prominently or to feature tobacco products in their advertising; this is in addition to the level I requirement. Pharmacists who participate in level III pledge to eliminate the sale of all tobacco products in their pharmacies. These pharmacies display a sign that states, "This pharmacy promotes a smoke-free generation by not selling tobacco products." By May 2, 1986, 64% of all Canadian community pharmacies (5511) were participating in the program; 39% were at level I, 14% at level II, and 11% at level III.

Since that time, Health and Welfare Canada and CPhA undertook an analysis of those pharmacies that joined the Stand Up and Be Counted program at level III to determine the impact of this involvement on their business. Based on the results, we believed that we could develop a new program to further challenge community pharmacists to discontinue the sale of tobacco products in their pharmacies. In January 1988, the "Pharmacists Against Cigarette and Tobacco Sales (PACT\$)" program was introduced. In our promotional materials, CPhA is challenging community pharmacists to join the PACT\$ program so that "their action and commitment to discontinue selling tobacco products will enhance their reputation amongst their customers and community as dedicated and caring health-care consultants." CPhA encourages pharmacists to participate by offering testimonials from other pharmacists who have already made the decision and supplying materials that could be used in local media to publicize a pharmacist's decision to participate.

CPhA will continue to promote the PACT\$ program to pharmacists throughout 1988. One of the major strategies is to appropriately confront the chain pharmacies with the challenge to discontinue the promotion and sale of cigarette products, the number one cause of preventable death in Canada, and thereby promote their images as health-care centers.

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## Concerns about manufacturer-mixed bulk packages

The article by Kleinberg and Duafala<sup>1</sup> on manufacturer-mixed bulk antineoplastic agents provides information on an alternative to a hospital-mixed system for preparing antineoplastic-drug doses. In my opinion the conclusions reached are erroneous and misleading because of certain flaws in the analysis and evaluation.

An initial discrepancy is the appellation of "manufac-