

# “The Pink Sheet”<sup>®</sup>

## PRESCRIPTION PHARMACEUTICALS AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

### THE NEWS THIS WEEK

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- **Fujisawa will fund Medicine Shoppe disease management pilot in transplant patients** using Health Hero Network's Internet communication system. HHN is finalizing deal with another firm in pharmacy industry for use of its technology, which has been launched in managed care arena ..... 25

### Fujisawa To Fund Medicine Shoppe Transplant Management Program

The Medicine Shoppe and Fujisawa will partner to conduct a disease management program for transplant patients using Health Hero Network's internet communication system.

The pharmacy company will meet with a St. Louis-area hospital shortly to discuss implementing the pilot program in conjunction with the hospital's transplant surgery department. Funding for the pilot program will be provided by Fujisawa, which markets the anti-organ rejection drug *Prograf* (tacrolimus).

The Medicine Shoppe hopes to initiate another HHN pilot program with the medical center, targeted at patients on lipid lowering agents. The pharmacy firm also has met with health systems to discuss HHN programs in congestive heart failure. It expects to work directly with physicians and health systems in implementing the pilots.

HHN's *Health Buddy* device and the Health Hero Network online service allow physicians and pharmacists to monitor chronically ill patients, and provide instructions, reminders and other information to patients at home.

Patients can view the information and respond through the Health Buddy appliance, a small desktop device that connects with the HHN online service via a telephone connection.

Patients logging on to the HHN online service see customized content posted for them by their health care provider, and may be asked specific questions about their health or asked to answer "quiz" questions meant to educate the patient on his or her condition and warning signs to watch for. All questions are in multiple choice format, and patients press one of four buttons on the appliance to respond.

The HHN online system can also be used by pharmacists to monitor patients after dispensing medications, Medicine Shoppe Exec VP- Marketing Gary Levine pointed out at a Nov. 9 Congressional briefing on the role of technology in medication practices.

The briefing was sponsored by the National Association of Chain Drugs Stores and co-sponsored by the National Consumers League, the National Council on Aging, Sens. Bennett (R-Utah) and Dodd (D-Conn.), and Reps. Greenwood (R-Penn.) and Dooley (D-Calif.). The presentation focused on the

pharmacist's role in disease management and the importance of allowing health providers, such as pharmacists, to access patient's health information.

HHS issued draft regulations on medical records privacy Oct. 29 that would limit access to electronic records ("The Pink Sheet" Nov. 1, p. 8).

*Health Hero Network is completing an agreement with another firm in the pharmacy field.*

Levine described technologies that pharmacists use to provide disease management services. The HHN online system can track multiple prescriptions, minimize adverse reactions, monitor patient compliance and manage dose titration when necessary.

The system can also ask patients if they need a prescription refilled, and arrange for pick-up at the participating pharmacy.

Mountain View, Calif.-based HHN plans to launch its Direct Connect Service, which will allow patients to send glucose, peak flow, blood pressure or weight readings directly to the physician or pharmacist, in late 1999 or early 2000.

The company has filed a 510(k) application with FDA for clearance to connect the Health Buddy appliance to

blood glucose meters, and will follow with applications for connections with additional home devices.

HHN is completing an agreement with another firm in the pharmacy/pharmacy benefit management field.

To date, the HHN online service has been launched in the managed care arena, with ongoing disease management programs in CHF (Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield); CHF and asthma (Telesis Medical Management); CHF and diabetes (Santa Clara County Individual Practice Association); and CHF and senior well being (Bridgeport Hospital and United Home Care).

Most HHN disease management programs begin as pilots with 50 to 100 patients, and are expanded to approximately 1,000 to 2,000 patients.

Three clinical trials using Health Buddy are underway in a variety of conditions: depression, bi-polar disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder (Stanford University); CHF and coronary artery bypass graft surgery (University of Nebraska); and juvenile asthma (University of California at Berkeley and Children's Hospital, Oakland). ♦ ♦