

October 5, 2009

Ellen Campbell, PhD
Florida A & M University
College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
Dyson Building Room 200E
1415 S. Martin Luther King Blvd
Tallahassee, FL 32307

Dear Dr. Campbell:

The American Lung Association in Florida, the Florida Academy of Family Physicians and the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association has come together to advocate for best practices in smoking cessation assistance for smokers who wish to quit. We are writing to urge the Pharmaceutical and Therapeutic Committee to consider the recommended standards of the Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guidelines on Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence and best practices recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for treating tobacco addiction:

- Smoking cessation benefits should include at least four 30-minute counseling sessions
- Coverage provided for all FDA-approved prescription and over-the-counter smoking cessation treatments
- Counseling and medication should be provided for at least two smoking cessation attempts per year – all with low or no co-pays or deductibles.

Providing the best therapies will not only save lives but will save Florida billions of dollars. The annual health care cost in Florida directly caused by smoking is \$6.32 billion and the Medicaid portion is \$1.2 billion. In addition, smoking costs Florida another \$6.47 million in lost productivity.

According to the CDC, more than 70 percent of smokers say they want to quit. Almost half of Florida smokers report they've tried to quit smoking in the past year, and nearly 60 percent say they plan to quit within the next six months.

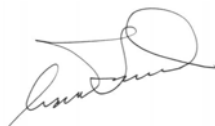
Without CDC recommended smoking cessation counseling and treatment, only five percent will succeed at overcoming their addiction. When a smoker does quit smoking successfully, a full 25 percent of the total financial benefits go directly back to him or her in the form of increased productivity and reduced absenteeism.

Disease prevention is a cost-effective way to control escalating health care costs, and among all disease prevention strategies, smoking cessation has been identified as the most cost effective. We urge you to make available all FDA approved pharmaceutical treatments in accordance with the CDC recommendations.

Sincerely,



Brenda Olsen
Chief Operating Officer



Tad Fisher
Executive Vice President



Stephen R. Winn
Executive Director



Cc: Anne C. Wells, Pharm.D. MS
Holly Benson, Secretary