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WashingtonStateMedicalAssociation

WSMA POSITION ON REPORT FROM PSHA RX COMMITTEE

The Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) supports evidence based care, best practices and technology assessment, and the need for data driven discussions on these issues by both the WSMA and other organizations such as the Puget Sound Health Alliance (PSHA).

The WSMA supports use of generics and therapeutic substitution, provided the physician still has the right to specify “dispense as written” when that is optimal/ideal/necessary for patient care.

Financial incentives to individual physicians to prescribe the lower cost generic drug creates a moral hazard (as does financial/gift pressures from pharmaceutical representatives to prescribe high cost brand name drugs).

The decision to restrict or prohibit pharmaceutical sales reps from visiting the physician’s office should ultimately rest with the physician, (with due deliberations regarding “moral hazards” but including all issues, including patient needs).

The use of samples can play a positive role in determining the best medication, and distribution of samples should be left to the discretion of the medical practice.

The WSMA will educate its members about the influence of pharmaceutical manufacturers’ marketing activities, including the distribution of samples (or more specific inducements) on physicians’ prescribing patterns and how to consider limiting marketing activities in the practice.

The WSMA will educate – or provide guidance – members about when it may be appropriate to use samples.

The Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) represents over 9,000 physicians and surgeons throughout the state of Washington. More information about the WSMA can be found at www.wsma.org.