APhA Warns Pharmacists and Patients About COVID-19 Test and Product Scams

Monday 6 April, 2020

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The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) cautions pharmacists and the public to be wary of fraudulent COVID-19 products and scams being offered online or through other channels during the pandemic. APhA today issued guidance to protect pharmacists and patients from frauds and scams.

APhA's new guidance highlights red flags that should raise concern and provides tips on how to avoid COVID-19 fraud and scams, including encouraging patients and pharmacy personnel to only buy through known and trusted suppliers.

APhA warns that the fraudsters are everywhere. Pharmacists are being offered fake and unapproved test kits in scams seeking money for pre-orders that likely will never be delivered. Fake vaccine was offered on the internet. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued warning letters to firms for selling fraudulent products with claims to prevent, treat, mitigate, diagnose or cure COVID-19. At least 10 companies have received FDA warning letters for selling phony COVID-19 treatment or prevention products.

> "Health care professionals, pharmacies, and patients must be cautious about offers of cures, treatments, and tests that are too good to be true," said APhA Senior Vice President, Pharmacy Practice and Government Affairs, Ilisa Bernstein, PharmD, JD, FAPhA. "The marketplace is seeing an explosion of scams, false and misleading claims, counterfeit and diverted products, and other opportunistic proposals that prey on our vulnerability at this time of crisis."

APhA's new guidance helps pharmacists be on the lookout for fraud and scams and provides steps they can take to protect them and their patients.

"Separating fact from fiction is difficult. Regulators and law enforcement must stay on top of this to protect the American public," Bernstein noted.

FDA has information about fake vaccines, drugs, and test kits for pharmacists and patients.

COVID-19 Fraudulent Medical Products – Protecting Pharmacists and Patients can be found here. For the latest news and information, check out APhA's coronavirus resource center.

About the American Pharmacists Association

The American Pharmacists Association, founded in 1852 as the American Pharmaceutical Association, is a 501 (c)(6) organization, representing 60,000 practicing pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists, student pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and others interested in advancing the profession. APhA is dedicated to helping all pharmacists improve medication use and advance patient care and is the first and largest association of pharmacists in the United States. For more information, please visit www.pharmacist.com

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