



**American
Pharmaceutical
Association**

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*The National Professional
Society of Pharmacists*

August 17, 2001

Ms. Kimberly Littleton Topper
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (HFD-21)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1091
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Ms. Topper:

The American Pharmaceutical Association (APhA), the national professional society of pharmacists, is interested in presenting at the September 13th and 14th Anesthetic and Life Support Drugs Advisory Committee meeting. Dr. John A. Gans, PharmD, APhA's Executive Vice President, will present on APhA's behalf.

We request approximately four minutes to present information related to the pharmacist's perspective on the use of opiate analgesics. Opiate analgesics are a valuable tool in the management of chronic pain. Pharmacists work with prescribers to provide the appropriate pain management medications to the millions of Americans that suffer from chronic pain due to disease, injury, or surgery. Pharmacists also recognize the potential for abuse with opiate analgesics, or any other controlled substance, and work to prevent the diversion and abuse of prescription medications. However, we caution against efforts to restrict the distribution of opiate analgesics or arbitrarily limit health care providers' ability to prescribe or dispense the appropriate pain relief medications. Restrictions in the drug distribution process would disrupt existing patient/pharmacist relationships and have a substantial negative impact on the millions of patients that rely on opiate analgesics to control chronic pain.

Correspondence on this issue should be directed to the American Pharmaceutical Association (APhA), 2215 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037, Attention: S. Bishop. Telephone: 202-429-7538; Facsimile: 202-638-3793.

Please contact Susan K. Bishop, APhA's Manager of Regulatory Affairs and Political Action, with any questions about this request. She may be reached at 202-429-7538 or skb@mail.aphanet.org.

Sincerely,

John A. Gans, PharmD
Executive Vice President