

PFIZER DTC HEARING ABSTRACT

Advancing Public Health Through Clear Consumer Health Communication

In today's health care environment, people are more responsible for and involved in health care decisions. Studies establish that people need and want clear and understandable health information that raises awareness of medical conditions and appropriate treatment options.

At the Hearing, Pfizer will present research-based best practices for developing clear and understandable health information. These practices are grounded on more than eight years of primary and secondary research, literature reviews, and expert consultation that Pfizer has conducted on health literacy and its impact on the public's understanding of health information.

Benefits of Making Prescription Medicine Information Health Literate

In order to help the public be an active participant in health care decision-making, health information needs to be clear and understandable. However, health information tends to be complex and is generally not designed to suit audiences without medical understanding, e.g., package inserts in prescription medicines, and traditional brief summary information that usually accompanies prescription medicine print advertisements. As a result, consumers often have difficulty reading and understanding health information. Studies have shown that when health information is presented in a clear, understandable, and easy-to-read format, millions more consumers actively engage in their healthcare. We encourage FDA to be cognizant of Clear Health Communications Principles in developing DTC communications policies and regulations.

Employing Clear Health Communication Principles

Through research conducted with consumers, healthcare providers, and health literacy experts, Pfizer has found that patients are more engaged when health information: 1) uses clear and concise language; 2) sequences information in an order that highlights the most important information that consumers want and need; 3) uses "patient-friendly" formats, and 4) contains understandable risk information. Employing these practices improves understanding of benefits and risks of prescription medicines and also helps to encourage the public to actively engage in their health care. This leads to better health outcomes.

Pfizer has used its research findings to create Clear Health Communication Principles that inform all of our print consumer communications, including all of our print DTC advertisements. We also have adopted research-based best practices to apply to our product Web sites by the end of 2006. Through application of these principles, Pfizer's consumer communications will help to engage millions more people in their healthcare.

Pfizer has also conducted research, in partnership with the National Consumers League, COSHAR Foundation, National Council on Aging, and with practicing physicians, to improve consumer understanding of the information contained in the print brief summary that is used with all print DTC ads. The findings of this research resulted in Pfizer's commitment to utilize a new

consumer-friendly and consumer-tested “Important Facts” print brief summary. Pfizer is working with the FDA to implement the “Important Facts” improvements in its DTC print advertising.