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Michigan Pharmacists Association and the University of Michigan Recognized for Initiative to Standardize Compounding of Oral Liquids for Pediatric Patients

Lansing, Mich.—Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA) and the University of Michigan (U-M) Health System and College of Pharmacy were recently honored by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) with the Cheers Award for an initiative to address an important patient safety concern affecting pediatric patients. Due to a lack of standard concentrations in compounding practices, serious errors can occur, especially at transitions of care.

Each year, ISMP presents this recognition to celebrate individuals, organizations, nonprofit associations, companies and agencies that have, through their actions during the previous 12 months, set a standard of excellence for others to follow in the prevention of medication errors and other adverse events. MPA and U-M received the award at an annual dinner held on Dec. 9, 2014, in Anaheim, Calif.

The two organizations created a project, funded through the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Safe Use Initiative, to help standardize the concentrations of more than 100 compounded medications. A survey was sent to Michigan pharmacies to identify key medications and concentrations being compounded, and then an expert panel evaluated the results and developed a set of voluntary standards that were endorsed by pharmacists and prescribers. The standards were disseminated to hospitals, community pharmacies and other care providers throughout Michigan. They have also been shared nationally with pediatric, pharmacy and medication safety organizations. A Web site was created, www.MIpedscompounds.org, which describes the initiative and provides access to the standards along with other tools and references for download.

“The state-wide cooperative effort resulted in a solution to a serious patient safety threat that prescribers, parents and families have had to deal with for years,” states Larry Wagenknecht, MPA chief executive officer. “The establishment of standardized formulations that resulted from this project will assist in eliminating a lot of the confusion that parents and caregivers have when giving medications to their children and will likely save the life of at least one child in the future.”

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit charitable organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, consumers, and professional organizations to provide education about medication errors and their prevention. For more information on the Cheers Award, please visit www.ISMP.org/cheers.

Michigan Pharmacists Association, representing the nearly 9,000 pharmacists and 15,000 pharmacy technicians in Michigan, strives to serve members by providing support, advocacy and resources that ultimately improve patient care, safety, health and the practice of pharmacy. For more information, visit www.MichiganPharmacists.org.

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