



Prevention, Intervention and Solutions by Pharmaceutical Companies

Theodore J. Cicero, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry
Washington University School of Medicine

March 28 & 29, 2007



PREVENTION

of abuse before it occurs

INTERVENTION

should unexpected high rates
of abuse occur

SOLUTIONS

**practical steps to implement
prevention on intervention**



PREVENTION

**An ounce of prevention
is worth a duck in the
hand.**



Prevention goals

- Stop abuse before it starts
- It is the industry's responsibility to prevent misuse or abuse of these drugs

Prevention (continued)

- Develop tamper-resistant formulations
- Ensure security in chain of manufacturer and supply
- De-incentivize sales force for sales volume alone

Prevention (continued)

- Sponsor-(Big Pharma?) groups to write educational materials for doctors, sales representatives, pharmacists and patients regarding hallmarks of substance abuse

Prevention (continued)

- Sponsor large scale studies to understand the nature of prescription opioid analgesic abuse: e.g. Demographics, reasons for use, source of drugs, co-morbidity

Prevention (continued)

- Sponsor a task force (industry, government and scientific community) to grapple with the issue of defining low and high rates of abuse to make scheduling more evidence-based

Prevention (continued)

- Appoint an independent Advisory Group
- Implement a risk management plan

INTERVENTION:

If an outbreak of abuse occurs

- Pray
- Very difficult once the dam breaks

Intervention (continued)

Intervention - Problems

- Hard to locate cases of abuse, hard to pinpoint loci
- Can't directly interview patients

Intervention (continued)

- Police and DEA are essentially of no help in this regard
- Some problems are culturally and sociologically imbedded

Intervention (continued)

- Enhance monitoring to see if the problem is temporary
- Identify aberrant prescribers in the area
- “Investigate” these doctors-sales force can be helpful

Intervention (continued)

- Stop marketing to suspect doctors and possibly turn them over to officials
- Carry out cost benefit analysis with extensive advice

Intervention (continued)

- Retrain sales force
- Dear Dr. Letters
- Use advisory group to rapidly gain an understanding of the nature of the problem

SOLUTIONS

- Long term educational efforts
- Prevent it from happening in the first place
- Address the problem as a whole