



PharmedOut Annual Report 2012

Thanks to our generous donors and devoted volunteers, PharmedOut continues to be an effective force for rational prescribing.

In 2012, PharmedOut:

Convened a third groundbreaking conference, [Missing The Target: When Practitioners Harm More Than Heal](#) in June. Funded through donations, the conference featured Rita Redberg, editor-in-chief of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*; Kay Dickersin, Director of the United States Cochrane Center; Carl Elliott, author of *White Coat, Black Hat*; and many other luminaries.

- This two-day conference attracted our largest and most diverse audience to date – 180 attendees who came from Canada, Brazil, and all over the U.S.
 - We examined how industry marketing infiltrates doctors' offices and affects patient outcomes, risks of CT scans and other medical devices, and unethical clinical trials in vulnerable populations.
 - Speakers from the Senate Committee on Aging, FDA, and American University's Washington College of Law named measures taken and further suggestions to protect public health and punish industry offenders.
 - A media panel discussed the responsibility of journalists to report on company scandals and lawsuits that arise.
- Conference DVDs are available for sale [here](#).

Was awarded a grant from Georgetown University to study the relationships between surgeons and medical device sales representatives, which has broadened PharmedOut's research to the inner workings of the industry that sells joint replacements and other surgically implanted devices.

Added two new publications to our growing list of peer-reviewed and consumer [articles](#), including:

- An [article](#) in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* on why using a placebo in clinical trials when an acceptable active comparator is available is unethical
- A [commentary](#) in the Hastings Center's *Bioethics Forum* blog examining the marketing of Low Testosterone Syndrome in Androgel's latest commercial.

Collaborated with colleagues at George Washington University to analyze [disclosures of pharmaceutical industry payments to DC physicians](#), and [how payments to DC psychiatrists may affect prescribing trends of antipsychotics to DC Medicaid recipients](#). Both reports were commissioned by DC's Department of Health (DOH).

Helped influence health policy on a larger scale as we met with DC DOH and [testified to DC Council's Committee on Health](#) with suggestions to strengthen current law to decrease



inappropriate use of antipsychotics in children.

Completed a three-part Drug Ads exercise slideshow that will be freely downloadable on our website for medical educators, designed to teach medical, nursing, and pharmacy students about misleading use of statistics, visuals, and references in commercials, websites, and print advertisements.

Was mentioned in more than 30 publications, including [The Washington Post](#) (on off-label, inappropriate antipsychotic prescriptions), [Scientific American](#) (on conflicts of interest among academic scientists), [Huffington Post](#) (on the danger of diet pills promoted by celebrities), [Consumer's Digest](#), the [Atlantic](#) (on drug companies as "legal drug-pushers), and the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

Provided talks on industry influence on healthcare at the International Society of Drug Bulletins in Canada, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Natividad Hospital and Dominican Hospital in California, George Washington University Hospital, George Mason University, and Georgetown University Medical Center.

Ramped up our social media presence on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), gaining more followers, friends, and "likes", and connecting to likeminded organizations and blogs.

Continued to provide free educational resources, including web-based continuing medical education [courses](#) through our website. Thousands of physicians and educators downloaded our resources, including *Fast Stats*, videos, [slideshows](#), and many other resources.