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NEWS RELEASE

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Record Numbers Connect to Rx4NJ; Over 100,000 NJ Patients Matched to Patient Assistance Programs

On 'National Patients Assistance Day', Rx4NJ marks an important program milestone and unveils a new program feature and patient resource

Trenton, N.J. – More than 100,000 New Jersey patients have been matched to an Rx4NJ patient assistance program since Rx4NJ began operating on January 4, 2005, according to recent data compiling website and call center activity.

Through March 19, 2006, 146,491 New Jersey patients had contacted Rx4NJ, with 112,471 of them being matched with at least one program that will provide them with free or nearly free prescription medicines – a 76 percent match rate. In 2002, the last year for which statistics are available, just 29,169 New Jersey patients received prescription drug assistance.

“The response to Rx4NJ – in just a little over one year – has far exceeded our expectations for the program,” said Bob Franks, president of the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, one of more than 60 sponsors of Rx4NJ. “It’s obvious, this program fills a very important and previously unmet need for many uninsured and low-income residents throughout the Garden State and we’re pleased that so many are taking advantage of this program.”

Rx4NJ, in a State House Press Conference, today announced another important tool for patients and caregivers – the addition of a free health clinic database available through the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPARx), which will help patients find low-cost or free medical services in their area.

“One of the newest features of Rx4NJ is a service that connects patients with free health clinics in their communities. Since the launch of Rx4NJ over a year ago and the subsequent launch of PPARx, we have learned that access to a physician is often the greatest obstacle to completing applications for Rx4NJ programs. We hope the added free clinic database will help the millions of patients in need,” said Franks.

Rx4NJ, which was launched on January 4, 2005, offers one-stop shopping to over 350 patient assistance programs (PAPs) providing easy access to 2,300 medications for free or at a reduced cost to eligible residents throughout New Jersey. Patients can contact this confidential service through an 800-telephone number (1-888-RXFORNJ) or Web site: www.rx4nj.org. Similar programs in other states typically have a 50 percent qualification rate; the 76 percent match rate makes the New Jersey program one of the most successful in the country.

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“Since the launch of Rx4NJ in January, 2005, we have been working extremely hard to educate New Jersey residents that help with prescription drug costs are just a toll free phone call or mouse-click away,” said Franks. “Through our grassroots outreach to opinion leaders, the Latino/Hispanic community and to members of the medical community, we’re making an impact on the healthcare needs of every day citizens. We’re pleased that Rx4NJ is resonating with the public and being fully utilized.”

To date, 70 training sessions have been conducted, reaching 3,843 New Jerseyans who are responsible for human services functions. In addition, millions of brochures have been distributed through training events, health fairs and other community relations events. Also, an Rx4NJ direct mail campaign blanketed NJ, hitting nearly 2 million households through outreach efforts. And, last summer, the Rx4NJ Bus, criss-crossed NJ in continuing efforts to make prescription medicines affordable and within reach of every person who needs them.

In addition to medical, Hispanic and community outreach, a multi-media, multi-million dollar advertising campaign was launched last year on New Jersey, New York and Philadelphia print, television and radio outlets. The advertising campaign was conducted in both English and Spanish.

Since the launch of Rx4NJ, the call center has been averaging 1,200 calls per week and patients continue to log on to the Rx4NJ website in large numbers for important updates and eligibility information.

Rx4NJ has received more than 75,000 Web site hits and nearly 72,000 phone calls since its launch. By answering 10 simple questions, a patient’s eligibility is determined. Then, a patient completes an enrollment form – online or over the phone – for each program for which the patient may be eligible. Enrollment forms can also be mailed if a patient prefers, to be filled out and returned directly to the PAP sponsor.

“Rx4NJ is proof that the partnership between New Jersey’s pharmaceutical and medical technology industry, healthcare and community groups and dozens of independent nonprofit groups works, and can come together to provide the most needy, most vulnerable patients with life-saving, life-enhancing prescription medicines,” said Franks. “We’re confident Rx4NJ will continue to have a significant impact on New Jersey patients as more people learn about the program.”

New Jerseyans can learn about their eligibility for free or discounted prescription drugs by calling 1-888-RX-FOR-NJ or visiting www.Rx4NJ.org on the Internet.

The Rx4NJ Partnership for Prescription Assistance includes a broad coalition of health care groups, patient advocacy organizations, and pharmaceutical and medical technology companies.

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