



June 16, 2008

Consumer Survey

Reducing the Impact of Pharmaceutical Marketing to Physicians and Promoting Appropriate Prescribing and Drug Safety

The pharmaceutical industry spends nearly \$30 billion annually on marketing. The majority (including samples) is spent on direct marketing to physicians (Donohue, NEJM, 2007).

Nationwide, prescription drug spending rose 500% (from \$40.3 billion to 200.7 billion) between 2000 and 2005 (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2007).

This survey was created in collaboration with



Disclosure of Industry Payments to Physicians

According to a Prescription Project survey, a majority of Americans (64%) say that it is important to know their physician's financial ties to pharmaceutical companies and 68% would support legislation requiring pharmaceutical companies to disclose gifts to doctors. The survey showed that most Americans disapprove of even small gifts to physicians and believe that the pharmaceutical industry has a large influence over prescribing decisions.

The pharmaceutical industry spends more than \$20 billion annually marketing to physicians, much of that marketing in the form of free gifts – ranging from pens and meals to pharmaceutical samples and continuing medical education classes.

Survey Highlights

- 52% of Americans believe that accepting gifts from the pharmaceutical industry influences how physicians make prescribing decisions (saying that the impact is either extremely large or large); another 26% believe these gifts have a moderate influence.
- Respondents tend to disapprove of most gifts to physicians:
 - 86% believe free dinners should not be allowed
 - 80% believe speaking fees should not be allowed
 - 78% believe free lunches at the office should not be allowed
 - 70% believe free note pads and pens should not be allowed
 - 62% believe free attendance at mandatory continue medical education classes should not be allowed
 - 64% believe it important to know physician's financial ties to pharmaceutical companies. (fig 1)
 - 68% would support legislation requiring pharmaceutical companies to publicly disclose any gifts or payments given to physicians. (fig 2)
 - 62% support legislation that makes it easier to tell how much money and gifts a doctor receives from pharmaceutical companies
- 71% would support legislation that enables clinical experts to provide unbiased noncommercial information about drugs to physicians in their offices

- 55% say they would be unlikely to directly ask their physicians if he or she has accepted gifts, speaking fees or other financial support from a pharmaceutical company

Fig 1. Importance of Knowing Physician’s Financial Ties to Pharmaceutical Companies

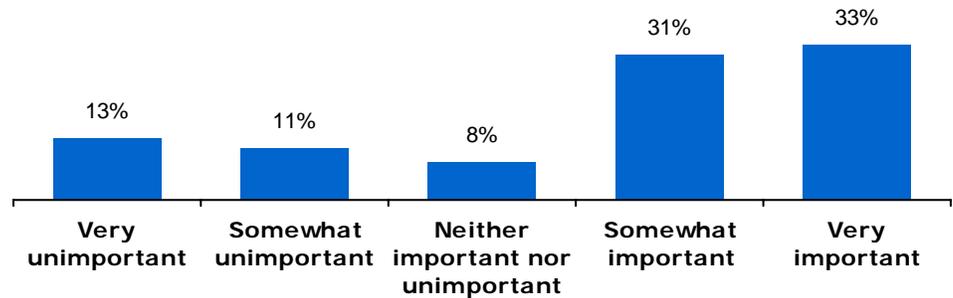
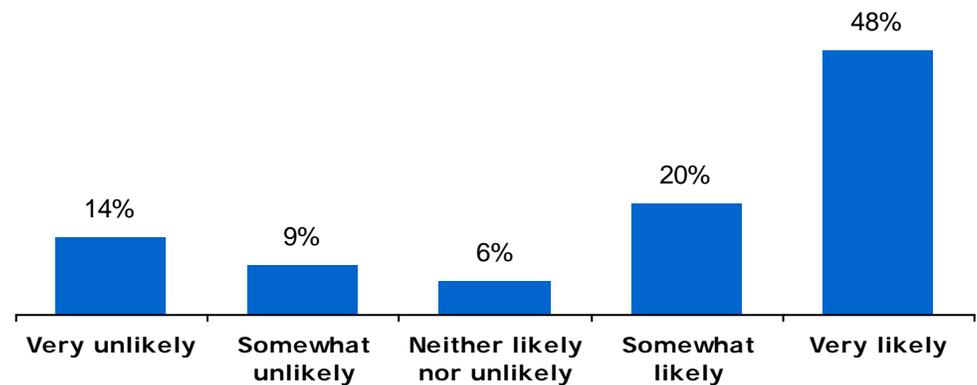


Fig 2. Likelihood to Support Legislation Requiring Pharmaceutical Companies to Publicly Disclose Gifts or Payments to Physicians



The survey was conducted by the national firm ICR during June 4, 2008 – June 8, 2008; 1009 adults from across the United States responded. To view survey results, please visit www.prescriptionproject.org.