

## RISING DRUG COSTS ATTRACT SENIORS TO ILLEGAL ONLINE PHARMACIES: ASOP Global, CSIP and NCL Join Forces to Keep Older Americans Safe Online

### **WASHINGTON, DC (June 6, 2016)**

With an estimated 49.5% growth of the U.S. senior population by 2030 and out-of-pocket prescription drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries skyrocketing\*, the [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global), [Center for Safe Internet Pharmacies](#)(CSIP) and [National Consumers League](#) (NCL) are joining forces to educate seniors and their caregivers about the health and financial risks associated with buying prescription medicines from illegal or rogue online pharmacies and provide the tools they need to stay safe when shopping for prescription drugs online.

“10,000 people turn 65 years of age every day in the U.S.,” explained [ASOP Global Executive Director Libby Baney](#). “Escalating costs for hundreds of drugs prescribed to treat chronic conditions not necessarily covered fully by Medicare make it more likely that seniors, who often are living on fixed incomes, will turn to the Internet to look for less expensive options. For twelve specialty drugs used to treat cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis and Hepatitis C, Medicare Part D enrollees face at least \$4,000 and as much as nearly \$12,000 in annual out-of-pocket costs in 2016 for one drug alone,” she added.

A recent review of more than 11,000 websites selling prescription medications online to U.S. consumers found approximately 96% do not comply with U.S. laws and 50% of medicines sold online are fake or counterfeit. Counterfeit products sold online may contain little or no active ingredients and/or dangerous and often deadly poisons, including floor wax, mercury, concrete, chalk, boric acid, road tar, paint or anti-freeze. Interpol estimates that counterfeit medicines are responsible for up to one million deaths annually worldwide.

“Our research shows that lower prices and convenience of shopping online are the two biggest factors driving consumers to the Internet, making older Americans easy targets for illegal online drug sellers offering ‘too good to be true’ discounts for fake or unapproved versions of the lifesaving medicines they depend on,” said [Marjorie Clifton](#), executive director of the Center for Safe Internet Pharmacies. “The criminal networks who develop fake websites have become very savvy in creating sites that are difficult to detect by even the most sophisticated consumers and law enforcement. This is why it is imperative that consumers are informed and our organizations are working together to do everything they can to shut down illegitimate sites.”

## **ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR SAFE ONLINE PHARMACIES**

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global) is an international 501(c)(4) social welfare organization dedicated to protecting patient safety globally and ensuring patient access to safe and legitimate online pharmacies in accordance with applicable laws. [Members](#) include organizations representing pharmacists, pharmacies and physicians; patient safety groups; public health organizations; pharmaceutical manufacturers; government entities; and Internet security organizations.

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