Sunshine Act Survey: More Than 50% of Physicians Unprepared

PR Newswire

PORTSMOUTH, N.H., Feb. 4, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- MMIS' third annual survey of doctors and their knowledge of the Sunshine Act [1] found that physicians are actually less informed than they were one year ago. With the release of the final rules implementing the Sunshine Act on February 1, 2013, consumers and interested parties will have access to a comprehensive and searchable database to review certain payments and transfers of value made by pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturers to physicians and teaching hospitals. This healthcare policy is intended to increase transparency on the relationships between physicians and pharmaceutical and medical device companies.

The survey revealed that of the more than 1,000 physician respondents, over half admitted they didn't know that the law requires pharmaceutical and medical device companies to report on expenditures annually, and that such information would be available in a publicly searchable database. 63% were deeply concerned that a record of these payments will be available in a publicly searchable database.

Additional survey findings disclose that 21% of physicians would sever their relationship with a manufacturer who reported inaccurate information about payments or transfers of value if disclosed to the public, and 43% admitted this would affect their ongoing relationship with industry. The survey also included written physician comments and concerns; these ranged from loss of privacy to a lack of awareness on the part of the general public as to the context of physician/industry relationships.

This lack of understanding is increasingly problematic as the law's implementation date draws closer. This year's survey results reflect a 5% increase in unfamiliarity with the law's provisions by doctors in all types of care locations, from teaching hospitals to private practices.

"There are approximately 3,000 manufacturers of drugs and devices providing valuable education and resources to physicians that enhance patient care. Increasing transparency of the relationship between industry and our healthcare providers will undoubtedly encourage scrutiny by the public, physician peers and their institutions," said CEO of MMIS, Michaeline Daboul . "Government, industry and physician organizations will need to increase communication in this new age of transparency, share data prior to public dissemination and provide a process for physicians and institutions to resolve disputes regarding incorrect or inaccurate information."

According to the survey, 54% of physicians who had industry relationships received samples, 57% received food or beverages in the workplace, 48% participated in a

medical industry sponsored program, 11% participated in speaker bureau programs, 10% participated in advisory board programs and most surprisingly, 2% are still accepting free event tickets or gifts.

MMIS, Inc. conducts this study annually to understand physician awareness and attitudes as they relate to the Sunshine Act. The study was conducted by The Regulatory Law Group, PLLC, using Healthcare Data Solutions' database of physicians, between January 17-18, 2013.

Michaeline Daboul (www.mmis-inc.com/executive-team [2]) is available for interviews to discuss the results of the survey and the Sunshine Act.

About MMIS, Inc.

MMIS, Inc. is a global technology company that develops secure communication solutions for many Fortune 500 companies. For over a decade, MMIS has deployed proprietary open collaboration technologies that enable its clients to drive greater productivity by managing and exchanging data, ideas, opinions, and intellectual capital in an ultra-secure environment.

Developed and marketed by MMIS, MediSpend® Family of Products are secure hosted platforms sold as a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions to meet the needs of industry, academic institutions and physicians. Developed by attorneys and IT specialists with over a dozen years of experience in healthcare compliance, the MediSpend® Family of Products represent the first end-to-end compliance solutions designed specifically to help pharmaceutical and medical device companies track and report HCP and HCO spend while simultaneously managing physician relationships. MediSpend® is a customizable, comprehensive, web-based solution that simplifies compliance with the Patient Protection Affordable Care Act.

About Healthcare Data Solutions: Healthcare Data Solutions is a leading healthcare information services company focused on building the most accurate, compliance-grade data on Physicians, Dentists, Nurse Practitioners and other Healthcare Providers, as well as Pharmacies and Hospitals. Healthcare Data Solutions provides healthcare data, physician validation programs, data processing, compliance services, web services and new customer acquisition programs for leading healthcare firms. Compliance clients can access to over 5 million healthcare provider profiles to crosswalk between government databases for accurate reporting. Healthcare Data Solutions is the fastest growing healthcare data services company in the United States on both the Inc. 5000 and Deloitte Fast 500 list in 2012. For more information, visit HealthcareDataSolutions.com [3].

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