

ALLIANCE NEWS



Alliance for Better Communities

SPECIAL EDITION, JULY 2019

ONLINE PHARMACIES: ARE THEY LEGIT?

By Martin J. Rothschild, J.D.



Can online doctors competently prescribe medications to unseen patients? This idea seems to defy the most basic

tenets of good medical practice, but several companies now offer the service. On these sites, people self-diagnose, select the drugs they want, enter some background on their health histories, provide their credit card numbers, and if approved by a doctor retained by the company receive their drugs in the mail. Doctors are essentially relegated to the role of gatekeepers, with “patients” selecting the drugs they want.

Some of the companies marketing so-called lifestyle drugs include *Roman* and *Hers*, which

sells erectile dysfunction and libido-raising drugs; a sister company called *Roman and Hims*, *Kick Health*, which sells, without FDA approval, blood-pressure pills claimed to relieve anxiety; *Nurx*, which markets contraceptives for women; and *Keeps*, which sells hair-loss treatments for men. Typically, the consulting doctors servicing these businesses work for separate companies to comply with applicable state and federal laws.



Vision: To have a community that is fully committed to the health and safety of its residents.

Mission: To reduce underage drinking and substance abuse and expeditiously address any emerging threats.



Know the Signs

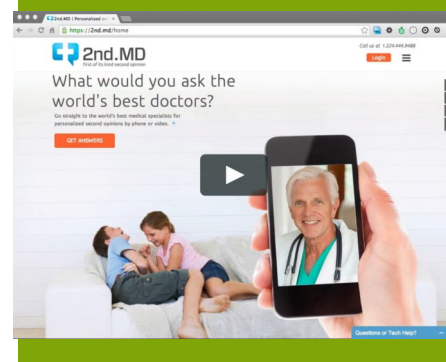
WARNING! Beware of online pharmacies that:

- ✗ Allow you to buy drugs without a prescription from your doctor
- ✗ Offer deep discounts or cheap prices that seem too good to be true
- ✗ Send spam or unsolicited email offering cheap drugs
- ✗ Are located outside of the United States

Tips for identifying safe online pharmacies include using only pharmacies that:

- ✓ Always require a doctor's prescription
- ✓ Provide a physical address and telephone number in the United States
- ✓ Offer a pharmacist to answer your questions
- ✓ Have a license with your state board of pharmacy

Before buying your medicine online, check to make sure you are using a safe, legal online pharmacy. Visit www.FDA.gov/BeSafeRx or call 1-888-463-6332 for more information.



Online pharmacies selling many different types of prescription drugs have grown in number and popularity. In response, the FDA has established *Be Safe Rx*, an FDA sponsored program to educate consumers about the dangers of fake online pharmacies. While the pricing of drugs can be very attractive to those without insurance coverage, the counterfeit medications sold by these vendors are often ineffective or even deadly. Shockingly, the FDA has determined that only 3% of online pharmacies comply with U.S. pharmacy laws and standards. Fraudulent pharmacies can be identified in several different ways, including their using fake storefronts on their websites, offering prices too good to be true, being located outside of the U.S., and allowing the purchase of drugs without a prescription.¹



Get the facts.

23%
of adult Internet consumers surveyed report that they have bought prescription medicine online.*

Buying from fraudulent online pharmacies can harm your patients.
According to the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, only 3 percent of more than 10,000 online pharmacies reviewed comply with U.S. pharmacy laws. Many rogue online pharmacies use fake "storefronts" to make people think they come from countries with high safety standards.

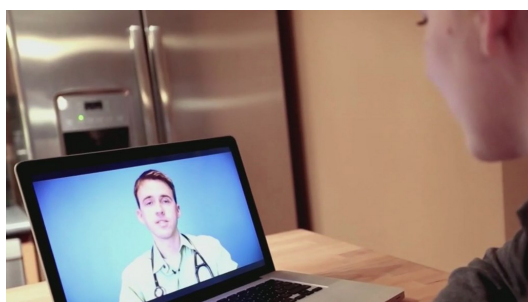
If a drug does not have the desired effect, ask where your patient got his or her prescription filled.
Use of counterfeit and substandard drugs can result in adverse reactions, drug interactions, or other contraindications. These effects may be mistakenly attributed to other causes, or may mask other symptoms.

Send your patients to www.FDA.gov/BeSafeRx.
FDA BeSafeRx is a public health campaign to help protect patients from fraudulent online pharmacies. The website includes warning signs of fraudulent online pharmacies and tips for buying medicine safely online. The site also has ready-to-print resources for you to share with your patients.

GET A PRESCRIPTION
KNOW YOUR ONLINE PHARMACY
ONLY BUY FROM A SAFE, LEGAL PHARMACY
TAKE MEDICINE AS DIRECTED

*FDA conducted a survey through an online panel in the U.S. composed of adults aged 18 years and older, who have purchased products using the Internet and agreed to participate in this survey. This survey is not representative of the general population.



As the DEA has made clear, selling or purchasing controlled substances with prescriptions written by “cyber-doctors” is illegal. Buying controlled substances online, particularly from foreign sellers, is punishable by imprisonment.

When purchasing from a foreign country, the buyer is treated under the law as an importer of illegal drugs. Rogue online pharmacies are being targeted by the DEA for prosecution, and their websites are being shut down when discovered.²

In sharp contrast to “cyber-doctors” and online pharmacies are telehealth sites run by established medical institutions and legitimate practicing doctors that provide a valuable service to those in rural areas, people who need care in off hours, and people who have medical needs that can be met adequately through online consultation. Medicaid and some large insurance plans cover telehealth services at about the same cost as in-person visits. CCHP, the Center for Connected Health Policy, has been designated the National Telehealth Policy Resource Center (NTRC-P) for the country.³

Still, while telehealth services hold the promise of bringing quality medical care to those who lack it, the risks of online drug purchasing outweigh the benefits.

ALLIANCE ACTIVITIES

DIRECTOR ANITA WORKS WITH SHERIFF O'NEIL ON ANTI-DRINKING AND DRIVING TELEVISION SPOT.



Watertown Daily Times
Serving the communities of Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis counties, New York

HEALTH SENSE FOR SENIORS EVENTS HELD AT SENIOR FACILITIES: LOCKBOXES PROVIDED.



KIMNEY'S PHARMACIST DISCUSSES DISPOSING OF OLD MEDS AND ISSUES WITH DRUG INTERACTIONS

Editorial-sending a message: Campaign seeks to warn of the dangers of underage drinking PUBLISHED: TUESDAY, MAY 28, 2019

This lesson is especially important at this time of year. The Alliance for Better Communities, which promotes drug-free living throughout Jefferson County, has adopted a national campaign to encourage parents to find safer alternatives. The Alliance for Better Communities has partnered with law enforcement agencies and local businesses to warn people of the perils of providing alcohol to teenagers. Those involved have created fliers along with newspaper, radio and television advertisements. ***"I think that parents have this conception that it's a safe alternative, when in fact it's not. It's encouraging kids to break the law, it's the parents themselves breaking the law and it's dangerous for parents to try and keep tabs on the kids who are coming and going,"*** Jefferson County Sheriff Colleen M. O'Neill, who is participating in this campaign, was quoted as saying in a story published May 15 by the Watertown Daily Times : ***"It's putting their safety on the line. There are a number of alternatives."***

"You can have a backyard party to invite the friends without any alcohol and have games to be played or other appropriate. entertainment," Anita K. Seefried-Brown, executive director of the Alliance for Better Communities, said in the story.



DIRECTOR ANITA GIVES PRESENTATION ON SENIOR SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE



ANN MARIE DISTRIBUTES MEDICATION LOCK BOXES

REFERENCES:

1. FDA, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, *About BeSafeRx*, Sept. 2013, retrieved from: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/besaferx-know-your-online-pharmacy/about-besaferx>
2. U.S. Dept of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration, Diversion Control Division, *Consumer Alert*, retrieved from: https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/consumer_alert.htm
3. Center for Connected Health Policy, *About Telehealth*, 2019, retrieved from: <https://www.cchpca.org/about/about-telehealth>

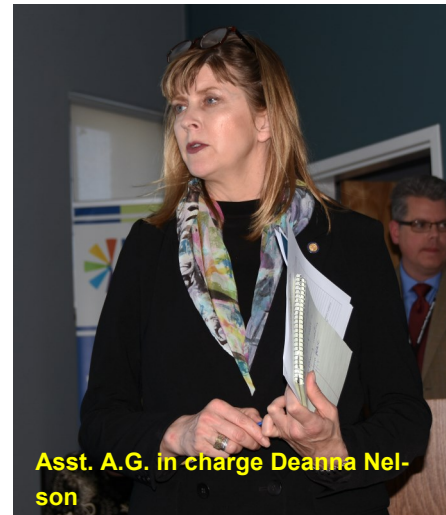
JUNE ALLIANCE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS— MEMBER ACTIVITY UPDATES



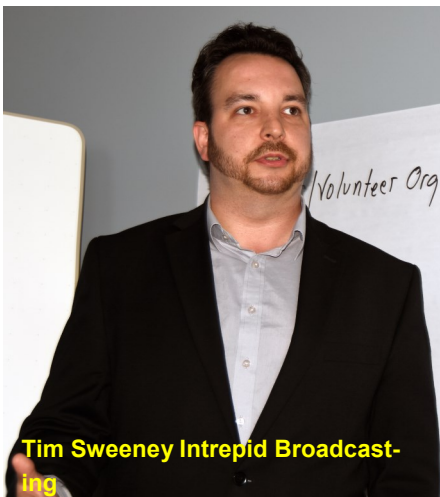
Sara Compas—Senator Ritchie's Rep.



Police Chief Chip Donoghue



Asst. A.G. in charge Deanna Nelson



Tim Sweeney Intrepid Broadcasting



Tim Ruetten—Comm. Services



Rev. Smith



Christine Sutton—Watertown City School District



Rev. Jamerson



Anita records it all!

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