

Press Release

Contacts:

Jim Dameron
Administrator
Oregon Patient Safety Commission
503.224.9226

Jim.dameron@oregonpatientsafety.org

Melinda Merrill
Director, Public Affairs
Fred Meyer Stores
503-797-3830

melinda.merrill@fredmeyer.com

FRED MEYER PHARMACIES JOIN OREGON PATIENT SAFETY COMMISSION'S VOLUNTARY REPORTING PROGRAM

SALEM, Ore. (September 17, 2007) -- The Oregon Patient Safety Commission is pleased to announce that Fred Meyer pharmacies have agreed to join the Commission's voluntary and confidential reporting program. With 50 retail pharmacies in Oregon, Fred Meyer has a significant presence in the state.

"Quality is fundamental to our organization," said Marc Cecchini of Fred Meyer. "Medication accuracy is an extremely high priority and we work hard at it. Our participation in the Patient Safety Commission is what's best for our customers."

Participating pharmacies will be asked to share confidential data with the Commission about any medication error that reaches the customer. If someone comes to a pharmacy and is given the wrong drug, the wrong dose of medication, or the wrong instructions, that event is reportable, even if no harm results.

The Oregon Patient Safety Commission is a semi-independent state agency governed by a 17-member board of directors appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. It is the only organization in Oregon exclusively dedicated to promoting a culture of patient safety with an emphasis on shared data, quality improvement, and quick absorption of new approaches. It is explicitly non-regulatory and non-punitive. (More information is at www.oregonpatientsafety.org; click on "Learn More.")

There are about 740 pharmacies in Oregon. The Commission is in the process of asking all of them to join the program to reduce the risk of adverse drug events. The goal is to better understand where and how adverse events occur, then to share strategies for reducing the risk of patient harm. Those risks are real and growing as the profession of pharmacy struggles with fewer pharmacists and aging baby boomers in need of more medications.

"We applaud Fred Meyer's willingness to join in this effort," said Lewis McCoy, chair of the Patient Safety Commission. "Ours is the only voluntary reporting program in the country, and the only program of any kind to include retail pharmacies. Organizations like Fred Meyer are showing that such a model works."

Fred Meyer Stores, based in Portland, Ore., offers one-stop shopping at its 127 multi-department stores in four western states. Nearly 30,000 Fred Meyer associates help customers fill their food, apparel, and general merchandise needs in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Stores range in size from 65,000 to 200,000 square feet and carry more than 250,000 products under one roof. Additionally, Fred Meyer contributes more than \$4 million to communities across the Northwest each year through grants from the Fred Meyer Foundation as well as product donations, cash donations and sponsorships. Fred Meyer is a division of The Kroger Co. (NYSE: KR). For more information, please visit their Web site at www.fredmeyer.com.

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