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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Healthcare Distribution Management Association (HDMA) Addresses Issue of Counterfeit Drugs

Reston, VA (December 23, 2002) - The Healthcare Distribution Management Association (HDMA) is committed to securing the safe and effective distribution of healthcare products to patients nationwide. HDMA is aggressively working to ensure patient safety and to address the issue of counterfeit drugs.

In October 2002, HDMA formed a taskforce to address its concerns about counterfeiting. The taskforce is currently developing recommendations, due in spring 2003, for FDA and the pharmaceutical community with steps that should be taken to ensure that counterfeit products are detected and eliminated before they ever reach patients. The taskforce will also recommend stiffer penalties for those who make and distribute counterfeit prescription drugs. HDMA is also actively working on developing solutions utilizing radio frequency identification technologies that will help combat the use of counterfeit products in the healthcare supply chain. Additionally, these efforts will also allow for the effective implementation of the Prescription Drug Marketing Act of 1987 (PDMA).

“We are deeply concerned about the serious issue of counterfeit drugs entering the U.S. supply system,” said Ron Streck, HDMA president and CEO. “No U.S. patient should receive counterfeit medications, and HDMA is aggressively working with its members and the pharmaceutical community to ensure patient safety.”

In addition, HDMA supports additional FDA funding to address the incidence of counterfeit drugs reaching U.S. patients via Internet pharmacies. HDMA also opposes the reimportation of prescription drugs in the United States by patients acquiring drugs abroad.

“In spite of HDMA’s and the industry’s concerted efforts to create a closed distribution system to assure patient safety, some U.S. patients rely on foreign Internet pharmacies to fill their prescriptions,” said Streck. “Many of these Internet pharmacies operate in countries where the incidence of counterfeit products is extraordinarily high. In addition, reimportation significantly increases the likelihood of counterfeit or adulterated drugs entering the U.S. market and reaching our medicine chests. HDMA advocates a closed U.S. distribution system to maintain patient safety and ensure product integrity.”

For more information about HDMA’s efforts to address counterfeiting, please contact Laura Mesko at 703/787-0000, ext. 225, or visit the HDMA Web site at www.HealthcareDistribution.org.

The Healthcare Distribution Management Association (HDMA) is a leader in stimulating innovations that enhance the distributors’ role in health care. Formerly the National Wholesale Druggists’ Association (NWDA), HDMA secures safe and effective distribution of healthcare products, creates and exchanges industry knowledge affecting distribution management, and improves standards and business processes that influence healthcare commerce.

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Healthcare Distribution Management Association
Formerly National Wholesale Druggists’ Association (NWDA)

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