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SDI: Novartis Regains No. 1 Position with Managed Care Pharmacy Executives

PLYMOUTH MEETING, Pa. (Feb. 4, 2009) — Novartis reclaimed the top overall ranking from pharmacy executives after falling second to Merck last spring, according to SDI's fall 2008 ***Managed Care Pharmacy Executive Promotional Audit***. Merck remained No. 1 among medical directors in the fall 2008 edition of SDI's ***Managed Care Medical Director Promotional Audit***.

Novartis' rebound to No. 1 with pharmacy executives can be attributed to a big win in the area of value-added services, taking the top spot away from Pfizer. One pharmacy executive said, "*Novartis has strongly responded to a previous deficiency in this area.*" Pharmacy executives considered Novartis a leader in value-added services due in large part to its successful patient education materials and staff support.

Other pharmacy executives had this to say about Novartis: "*Many useful [continuing education] programs and patient educational materials*"; and "*as we were looking into Medicare Part D, they were able to provide educational support for the staff.*"

While recapturing the No. 1 overall ranking, Novartis maintained its top position in the corporate approach category with praise from pharmacy executives. One executive said, "*Novartis corporate has made some very effective changes to their personnel on the ground for managed care; they have also been very much supportive on non-drug*

programs such as speakers for patient experience.” Another said, “Helpful publications and great educational offerings, webinar, etc.”

Novartis’ return to No. 1 overall can also be attributed to its rebound in the contract category, in which it rose to second compared with fourth in spring 2008. One pharmacy executive was pleased with Novartis’ contracts and commented, *“Especially in regards to contracting for drugs for hypertension; good contract/discount offerings.”*

SDI’s ***Managed Care Formulary Drug Audit*** shows clear evidence of the success Novartis is having with its contracting strategies. According to the fall 2008 audit, more than 80% of HMO members had access to Novartis’ hypertension drug Diovan, an angiotensin II receptor blocker (ARB), at a preferred formulary position, defined as a drug being reimbursed at a flat, first-, or second-tier co-pay. This was the highest percentage of access for all ARBs. Daiichi Sankyo’s Benicar was next with more than 70% of HMO members having access at a preferred position.

Longitudinal patient data in SDI’s ***Vector One®: Payer*** reflects the preferred position that Diovan has with commercial HMOs. In the second half of 2008, Diovan led all ARBs with 37% of *new patient* retail pharmacy prescription starts for patients covered by commercial third-party payers. Next was Benicar with 22% of new patient starts.

About SDI’s Managed Care Analytics

For over 20 years, SDI has provided the pharmaceutical industry with crucial managed care consultation. It has built an extensive portfolio of managed care market research solutions. SDI’s combination of longitudinal patient data and relationships with influential managed care executives is unmatched. SDI is uniquely positioned to provide multidimensional answers to all managed care business questions.

About SDI

Since 1982, SDI has been delivering innovative healthcare data products and analytic services to the pharmaceutical, biotech, healthcare, medical device, financial services, and consumer packaged goods industries. SDI is the leading provider of de-identified patient-level data analytics and offers a broad array of solutions and insights across the continuum of care. These include custom and syndicated patient-level data studies; localized disease and treatment surveillance and projection; market research audits; healthcare profiles; comprehensive managed care offerings; clinical trial optimization; direct-to-patient pharmacy programs; marketing effectiveness; sales targeting and compensation products; data integration, warehousing, and mining; list services; and

direct marketing services. Its current roster includes the top 50 pharmaceutical/biotech companies. For more information, visit www.sdihealth.com or call 610.834.0800.