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Prescription Drug Abuse Motives Student-Run Call Center

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – Prescription Drug abuse is rampant in the United States. It's a deadly issue that needs to be corrected, which is why Cedarville University's School of Pharmacy opened the Medication Therapy Management LLC Call Center.

The new Center is designed to educate patients about the proper way to use, prescription drugs. The Center was formed earlier this year, but officially opened in December with 5,000 patients from coast-to-coast.

"Cedarville University is one of the first universities to look at its process and determine a way to help people solve an important medical need," said Don Orleck, president, CEO and founder of Ohio Pharmacy Counseling Services. "This (the LLC) will be about providing patients with important information that will help them better understand the health issue they are dealing with, and how to properly use medications to improve both length and quality of life."

The center allows the School of Pharmacy, in collaboration with Ohio Pharmacy Counseling Services LTD, to maintain a management call center that helps people with their medications. Pharmacy students work between 8 am and 8 pm Monday through Saturday answering questions and educating patients.

Marc Sweeney, Pharm.D., dean of Cedarville University's School of Pharmacy, and Orleck believe a large population of the United States currently overly medicates. The call center staff addresses this problem, partnering with the Ohio Pharmacy Consulting Services LTD to secure patient information from insurance companies.

The call center allows second- third- and fourth-year professional pharmacy students to answer pharmacy-related questions for patients nationwide. The patients' insurance covers the costs for the consultation and the Center is expected to serve up to 15,000 patients annually. Andrew Straw, Pharm.D., associate professor of pharmacy practice, and Jeff Huston, instructor of pharmacy practice, oversee the center and students.

"Students will be proactively assisting patients in understanding how best to take their medications," said Sweeney, who was inspired by Northwest Ohio Medical University's LLC to start the Cedarville initiative. "Since up to 50 percent of people in the United States take their medications incorrectly, this program will help reduce that problem—and also identify other drug-related problems."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,760 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.