

AmeriSource's Health Centre Unlocks \$14 Billion Market for Family Pharmacists; Comprehensive Nutraceutical Program To Be Offered Nationally

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MALVERN, Pa.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--July 8, 1999--AmeriSource Health Corp. (NYSE:AAS), one of the nation's leading wholesale pharmaceutical distributors, today announced the launch of The Health Centre(R), a national nutraceutical program that includes a complete sales and marketing component for Family Pharmacy(R) the Company's community pharmacist network.

The program provides independent drug stores with easy access to the nutraceutical market, the fastest growing over-the-counter category, with drug store sales in excess of \$14 billion.

"The Health Centre(R) emphasizes AmeriSource's long-term commitment to putting its customers first," stated R. David Yost, AmeriSource's president and chief executive officer.

"Our nutraceutical program provides members of our community pharmacist network the opportunity to increase consumer traffic and gross profits as well as the ability to offer their customers products and information that they want and need."

A comprehensive package, The Health Centre(R) offers a complete merchandising program, drug interaction assessment software and continuing education for pharmacists on the nutraceutical category. The drug interaction assessment function is supported by AmeriSource's successful MedAssess software, which is designed to aid pharmacists in their care-based activities, including drug use review.

"With consumers hungry for information on products in the nutraceutical line, we felt it was important to give Family Pharmacy(R) members access to more than just the merchandise," stated Tom Connolly, Corporate Vice President Sales and Marketing at AmeriSource.

"By providing elements such as the drug assessment software and the continuing education program, pharmacists can be confident that they have the tools to appropriately advise their customers."

Health Centre(R) will begin with the addition of herbals and homeopathic medicines to the existing AmeriSource pharmacy product line. Later in 1999, the line will be enhanced with the introduction of a complete private label product line and a variety of health and beauty aides.

A term coined in the 1990's, "nutraceuticals" include dietary supplements, specialty nutritional products and selected foods and beverages that can be linked to scientifically proven health benefits.

According to a recent market study from Frost & Sullivan, an independent research firm based in California, the consumer behaviors that are driving growth in the nutraceutical category include nutritional awareness, increasing self-reliance in health care decisions, and consumer acceptance of garlic, ginseng and ginkgo as health maintenance aides.

Nutraceuticals are currently controlled by the FDA under the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994, and it is expected that within the next few years new regulations will reclassify nutraceutical products as over-the-counter drugs. Some experts predict these changes will cause functional additives, such as herbal extracts, to see the strongest growth in demand.

Designed with the needs of independent retailers in mind, Family Pharmacy(R), a division of AmeriSource Health Corporation, provides group-buying strength and improves efficiency in advertising and operations to more than 2,500 independent pharmacists across the country.

AmeriSource is a Fortune 200 company with revenue of \$8.7 billion for fiscal year 1998. The Company is one of the nation's leading pharmaceutical distributors and serves the healthcare industry from a nationwide network of 22 strategically located distribution centers. News and additional information about AmeriSource are available at www.amerisource.com.

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