

Amerisourcebergen Corporation Logo

AmeriSource Completes Development & Testing of Autonomics Central Processing Program

August 6, 2001

State Pharmacy Board OKs First "Live" Central Processing Program AmeriSource Offers Free Trial of New Program

VALLEY FORGE, Pa., Aug 6, 2001 (BUSINESS WIRE) --AmeriSource Health Corporation (NYSE:AAS), one of the nation's leading pharmaceutical distributors, announces the national launch of its Autonomics Central Processing Program.

The national introduction follows a period of development and testing work on the new program conducted in conjunction with northeast Ohio drug store chain, Medic Drug, Inc.

"This is the first time a pharmacy has been able to put the concept of central processing into practice," explains Ron Clerico, RPh, AmeriSource Vice President and General Manager of Autonomics. "The technology is proven, and AmeriSource has received initial approval from the Ohio State Board of Pharmacy to operate as a centrally located pharmacy for customers looking to take advantage of the efficiencies Autonomics offers."

Mike Bukach, director of pharmacy for Cleveland, Ohio-based Medic Drug, helped AmeriSource test the Autonomics program at one of the chain's stores. He said he was intrigued by the greater potential for savings with a central processing program like Autonomics versus a central fill process.

"Autonomics makes the pharmacist's job easier," Bukach explains. "The ability to have many of the time-consuming aspects of filling a prescription handled outside of the retail setting takes a tremendous amount of stress and strain away from the pharmacist who should be concentrating on patients, not paperwork."

More Time for Patients

A January 2000 National Association of Chain Drug Stores study revealed that central processing programs such as AmeriSource's Autonomics program are poised to take over about 35 percent of pharmacists' routine tasks, including third party activities, inventory management and drug utilization review.

The Autonomics program automates these time-consuming prescription fulfillment activities to help pharmacies lower costs and allow pharmacists more time to counsel patients. Autonomics also allows the pharmacist to tackle higher script volumes without increasing personal fatigue and stress.

Unlike central fill operations, all patients benefit from central processing since any prescription -- new, refill or a controlled substance -- is handled by Autonomics. Autonomics acts as a precursor to central fulfillment, in-store automation and/or unit of use packaging to further streamline the entire prescription process.

To bring its Autonomics program to customers, AmeriSource has partnered with TechRx, a leading provider of pharmacy software solutions. TechRx's T-Rex(TM) Central Processing software provides the "engine" for the Autonomics program.

With Autonomics, prescriptions are electronically transferred from the retail drug store to AmeriSource's central processing center in Columbus, Ohio, where routine fulfillment activities such as insurance adjudication, drug utilization review and physician contact for clarifications or exceptions are quickly completed.

The processed prescription is then electronically returned to the pharmacy for immediate dispensing. As the pharmacy's inventory is depleted, central processing automatically generates an order enabling the AmeriSource distribution center to replace the medications the next day.

"Autonomics results in significant improvements in the retail pharmacy's operations," Clerico says. "Costs are lowered through inventory control, reduced cost per prescription, reduced errors and a marked increase in pharmacist productivity and morale. But the real benefit is in consumer service improvements. Pharmacists have more time to focus on patient care and counseling, while patients experience no delay in prescription delivery. Greater consumer focus by the pharmacist allows the pharmacy to establish that critical link with the patient that builds future business."

Medic's Bukach agrees, saying "Autonomics gives the pharmacist back his professionalism. Now, patients will see the pharmacist talking to them more and counseling them, instead of talking on the phone to insurance companies."

Bukach adds that Medic Drug plans to roll-out the Autonomics program to other locations in its privately owned, 29-store chain.

Free Trial Offer

AmeriSource is offering customers a free trial offer for the Autonomics program. For information on the offer or how Autonomics can benefit a pharmacy, contact Autonomics at 614/473-4001 or email to rclerico@amerisource.com.

About AmeriSource

AmeriSource Health Corporation, with approximately \$14 billion in annualized operating revenue, is a leading distributor of pharmaceutical and related healthcare products and services, and the industry's largest provider of pharmaceuticals to the acute care/health systems market.

Headquartered in Valley Forge, PA, the Company serves its base of about 15,000 customer accounts through a national network of more than 22 strategically located distribution facilities. For news and additional information about the company, visit its web site at www.amerisource.com

Forward-Looking Statements

The foregoing communication contains certain "forward-looking statements" within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These statements are based on management's current expectations and are subject to uncertainty and changes in circumstances.

Actual results may vary materially from the expectations contained in the forward-looking statements. The forward-looking statements herein include statements addressing future financial and operating results of AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig and the timing, benefits and other aspects of the proposed merger.

The following factors, among others, could cause actual results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements: inability to obtain, or meet conditions imposed for, governmental approvals for the transaction; failure of the stockholders of AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig to approve the merger; the risk that the businesses of AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig will not be integrated successfully; failure to obtain and retain expected synergies; and other economic, business, competitive and/or regulatory factors affecting the businesses of AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig generally.

More detailed information about these factors is set forth in AmeriSource's and Bergen Brunswig's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including each of their Annual Reports on Form 10-K for fiscal 2000 and their most recent quarterly reports on Form 10-Q.

AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig are under no obligation to (and expressly disclaim any such obligation to) update or alter their forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

Additional Information

In connection with their proposed merger, AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig filed a joint proxy statement/prospectus with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Investors and security holders are advised to read the joint proxy statement/prospectus because it contains important information.

Investors and security holders may obtain a free copy of the joint proxy statement/prospectus and other documents filed by AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig at the Securities and Exchange Commission's web site at www.sec.gov.

The joint proxy statement/prospectus and such other documents may also be obtained for free from AmeriSource or from Bergen Brunswig by directing such request to AmeriSource Health Corporation, General Counsel, 1300 Morris Drive, Suite 100, Chesterbrook, Pennsylvania 19087-5594, Telephone: 610/727-7000; or to Bergen Brunswig Corporation, Attention: Corporate Secretary, 4000 Metropolitan Drive, Orange, California 92868-3510, Telephone: 714/385-4000.

Participants in Solicitation

AmeriSource and Bergen Brunswig and their respective directors, executive officers and other members of their management and employees may be deemed to be participants in the solicitation of proxies from their respective stockholders in connection with the proposed merger. Information concerning AmeriSource's participants in the solicitation is set forth in AmeriSource's Current Report on Form 8-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 19, 2001, and information concerning Bergen Brunswig's participants in the solicitation is set forth in Bergen Brunswig's Current Report on Form 8-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on March 19, 2001.

CONTACT:

AmeriSource Corporation, Valley Forge
Michael N. Kilpatric, 610/727-7118
mkilpatric@amerisource.com
or
Kapnek Communications
Linda Barlow, 215/830-9890
lbarlow@voicenet.com