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**Contact:** Rebecca M. Morgan  
Director of Communications  
703-739-2330 ext. 1032  
202-280-8068 (mobile)

## **AACP and NHeLP Release Two Vital Resources to Help Pharmacists Improve Patient Communication**

**Alexandria, Va.** – The National Health Law Program (NHeLP) and the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) are proud to announce the release of the [Language Services Resource Guide for Pharmacists](#) and the [Analysis of State Pharmacy Laws: Impact of Pharmacy Laws on the Provision of Language Services](#) survey to assist pharmacists and pharmacies improve language access for their patients.

Effective communication between pharmacists and patients is critical to ensuring that patients receive the health information they need to take their medications properly and to be aware of and manage potential adverse reactions that could develop. For patients who are limited English proficient (LEP), effective communication about their medication regimen is even more imperative.

Developed with input from AACP, the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations and an Advisory Committee convened in March 2009, the *Language Services Resource Guide for Pharmacists* gathers basic information about providing language services in one document. Information includes interpreter and translator associations and agencies, training programs, assessment tools and other materials.

“As pharmacists treat increasing numbers of limited English proficient patients, these new reports offer concrete information to assist pharmacists in ensuring effective communication between pharmacists and their patients and complying with legal requirements to provide language services,” said Mara Youdelman, NHeLP senior attorney and co-author of the *Language Services Resource Guide for Pharmacists*.

Virtually all states have requirements regarding oral counseling and distribution of written materials. To comply with these requirements, pharmacists must effectively communicate with all of their patients, not only those who speak English. Included in the guide is the *Analysis of State Pharmacy Laws: Impact of Pharmacy Laws on the Provision of Language Services* stand-alone pharmacy survey.

The analysis first outlines federal requirements for providing language services (oral interpretation and written translated materials) to LEP patients. Then, it summarizes results from a 50-state (plus the District of Columbia) survey of pharmacy laws that are related to the provision of language services. While few pharmacy law provisions directly address language services, each state has provisions that support providing language services. Most provisions can be categorized in three areas: provision of oral counseling, distribution of written information (either through the label or additional written information) and collection and maintenance of data in a patient medication profile.

“Colleges and schools of pharmacy must equip their students with the appreciation of the importance of effective communication with LEP patients,” said Lucinda L. Maine, Ph.D., R.Ph., executive vice president and CEO of AACP. “This guide will enhance the ability to achieve this goal.”

Each college and school of pharmacy will receive two copies of the *Language Services Resource Guide for Pharmacists* and the *Analysis of State Pharmacy Laws: Impact of Pharmacy Laws on the Provision of*

*Language Services.* A searchable version of the guide is available on the NHeLP Web site at [www.healthlaw.org](http://www.healthlaw.org).

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About AACP

Founded in 1900, AACP is a national organization representing the interests of pharmacy education and educators. Comprising 120 accredited colleges and schools of pharmacy including more than 5,900 faculty, 54,700 students enrolled in professional programs and 5,400 individuals pursuing graduate study, AACP is committed to excellence in pharmacy education.



About NHeLP

The National Health Law Program works with and on behalf of limited-income people, people with disabilities, and children to improve their access to quality health care, and to enforce their legal rights to health. NHeLP works with courts, government agencies, and Congress to ensure quality health care for the most vulnerable members of our society.