



Dear Health-Care Professional,

As a physician or pharmacist on the front lines of health care, you likely are concerned about the spiraling cost of prescription drugs and your patients' access to needed medicines. As you know, the high price of many medicines today can result in a significant financial burden for patients, with many failing to follow their doctor's orders and discontinuing their medicines simply because they cannot afford them.

But there is something you can do to help. *Consumer Reports* has created a **FREE**, public education project ([www.CRBESTBUYDRUGS.org](http://www.CRBESTBUYDRUGS.org)) to help physicians and pharmacists work with their patients to identify effective, safe, and affordable prescription medicines. And we are joined by the Minnesota Senior Federation and Minnesota Medical Association to help spread the word about this project.

*Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* provides unbiased, easy-to-understand information about drug effectiveness, safety and pricing in various therapeutic categories, and identifies proven and affordable alternatives to more expensive medications. The project is based on an independent analysis of the available scientific evidence, and is peer-reviewed by physicians with expertise in each drug class. We are not associated with the pharmaceutical industry, and the nonprofit Consumers Union maintains complete independence and editorial control over the project.

The goal of this project is two-fold: to encourage patients who cannot afford their medicines to open a discussion with their doctor or pharmacist about identifying more cost-effective drugs; and to help inform health-care professionals – who often are bombarded with material primarily from the pharmaceutical industry – of the latest evidence, safety information and price differentials from an independent source.

By discussing drug costs and choices with your patients, and working with them to identify medicines that are appropriate for them, we hope to improve health outcomes for all – a goal we share with you. Please look through the enclosed materials, and consider joining us in our effort to help low-income, the uninsured, seniors and others identify effective, affordable medications:

- Talk with patients about the financial impact of their drug options;
- Hang the enclosed poster in patient waiting and examining rooms, and make information about *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* available;
- Encourage patients to visit [www.CRBESTBUYDRUGS.org](http://www.CRBESTBUYDRUGS.org) for information about drugs for their medical conditions;
- Sign-up for free updates from *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* to learn when information is posted about additional therapeutic categories; and
- Encourage others in your medical community to learn about and support *Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs*.

*Consumer Reports Best Buy Drugs* is administered by Consumers Union, the nonprofit publisher of *Consumer Reports*, with a substantial grant from the Engelberg Foundation and a grant from the National Library of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health.

Sincerely,

**Gail Shearer**  
Director  
CR Best Buy Drugs

**Janine Stiles**  
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**David Luehr, MD**  
President  
Minnesota Medical Assoc.