



PHARMACISTS UNITED FOR
TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY
TRUTHRX.ORG

CONTACT: Monique Whitney, APR
Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency
m. (505) 480-4150
Monique@TruthRx.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 19, 2018

**PUTT COMMEND COLUMBUS DISPATCH FOR DILIGENT INVESTIGATION AND
REPORTING ON DECEPTIVE PBM PRACTICES**

**Dispatch Editorial Staff Serve Ohioans, Honor the Tradition of Investigative Journalism by
Exposing the Hidden Practices of Nation's Largest PBMs**

WINSTON-SALEM, NC (June 19, 2018) – Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency expresses its thanks and appreciation to reporters Lucas Sullivan, Catherine Candisky and the editorial staff of the *Columbus Dispatch* for its investigation and reporting of the last few months of the secretive practices of the nation's largest pharmacy benefits managers (PBMs), in the process uncovering potentially hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars wasted on the prescription benefits middlemen who manage Ohio's Medicaid program.

“At a time when journalism is under attack and investigative reporting resources are stretched nearly to the breaking point, we commend the courage and willingness of Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Candisky and their editors to push to get this story told,” said PUTT president Teresa Stickler. “Without this kind of coverage Ohio taxpayers would be unaware that money intended to cover healthcare costs for the state's poorest populations is instead lining the pockets of multi-billion dollar corporations. We also acknowledge and appreciate the Ohio Pharmacists Association and the Ohio pharmacies who blew the whistle on PBM corruption and profiteering in their state.”

Notably, Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Candisky's latest article points to a disturbing trend PUTT has worked for years to expose: the questionable “spread” - or difference - between what PBMs charge the state for administering prescription claims, and what they pay the pharmacies who dispense medications for Medicaid recipients and other payers. In Ohio, the *Dispatch* uncovered that CVS Caremark, one of the three largest PBMs and manager of the state's Medicaid prescription program, received an average of 12 percent more than it paid the pharmacies that dispense Medicaid prescriptions. Based on the *Dispatch*'s findings, PUTT estimates CVS Caremark could have made as much as \$360 million off Ohio taxpayers last year alone.

PUTT is calling on the rest of the U.S. to follow in the footsteps of Ohio and investigate the “black box” of prescription pricing, a topic foremost on the minds of American consumers and patients. PUTT also asks the nation's investigative journalists to follow the money and keep pressing these large,



PHARMACISTS UNITED FOR
TRUTH AND TRANSPARENCY
TRUTHRX.ORG

publicly-held, multi-billion dollar PBMs for answers and accountability in their role as intermediaries between patients, pharmacies and insurance payers and drug manufacturers.

Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency (PUTT) exists to unify, promote and preserve independent pharmacies through education and access; to monitor PBM and other industry practices which, when identified as abusive, are exposed in various manners in the interest of improving the quality, safety and cost of patient care. For more information about the negative impact of Pharmacy Benefits Management company practices on the cost and accessibility of medications, or to learn more about PUTT, visit TruthRx.org or contact Monique Whitney, (505) 480-4150.

#