

National Black Church Initiative

P.O. Box 65177
Washington, DC 20035
202-744-0184
dcbei2002@gmail.com
www.naltblackchurch.com

Contact:

Rev. Anthony Evans
202-744-0184

August 3, 2011

For Immediate Release

NBCI Joins with Triad Care and Local Health Professionals to Improve Drug Compliance Amongst African Americans

NBCI and Triad Care Will Donate Over 200,000 Prescription Discount Cards in Savannah, Georgia

Washington, D.C. – The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a faith-based coalition of 34,000 churches comprised of 15 denominations and 15.7 million African Americans committed to the eradication of racial disparities. For the past 20 years our primary mission has been to improve the health status of our congregants and we have achieved monumental successes. Our recent advocacy of drug compliance stems from the urgent need to reduce preventable deaths amongst African Americans and to educate our membership on the importance of following medical advice. Through our partnership with Triad Care and the dissemination of an invaluable prescription discount card, NBCI can measurably improve the drug compliance, and thereby the health, of African Americans in Savannah, Georgia.

Please join us for a **press conference on Tuesday, August 9, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.**, in the park adjacent to City Hall. In addition, we formally invite you to a **NBCI Drug Compliance Grand Rounds Symposium on Wednesday, August 10, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at First African Baptist Church** at 23 Montgomery Street in Savannah, Georgia.

As a result of our research and commitment to the African American community we have created what we believe our lifelong work - NBCI Health Emergency Declaration (HED). HED is a 7 year, programmatic preventive health initiative launched in faith-based communities nationwide to change the landscape of U.S. healthcare and dramatically transform the current African American health paradigm. Please visit our website for more information about HED and our Health Initiatives at <http://www.naltblackchurch.com/health/>.

Rev. Anthony Evans, President of NBCI says, “This drug compliance program is an essential component to fulfilling the goals and objectives of HED. It is critical to address the health needs of our membership - immediately focusing our attention on African Americans suffering from chronic disease states. Drug compliance is a significant element of improving the health of our community and reducing the racial disparities that have continued to plague African Americans.”

Statistics illustrate that we can ill afford to not tackle the issue of drug compliance immediately. According to the American Heart Association:

- 12% of Americans don't fill their prescription at all
- 12% of Americans don't take medication at all after they fill the prescription
- Almost 29% of Americans stop taking their medication before it runs out
- 22% of Americans take less of the medication than is prescribed on the label

Additionally, according to the National Council for Patient Information and Education, about 50% of the 2 billion prescriptions filled each year are not taken correctly. Amongst African Americans, drug compliance statistics are even more dramatic. In a retrospective study in *The Journal of the National Medical Association* comparing medication compliance among Medicaid-insured patients who were given first-time prescriptions for oral anti-diabetic agents, African Americans had a 12% lower adherence rate than whites.

Cultural beliefs also play a part into African American drug compliance. In a study conducted by the CDC in New Orleans, the disparate rate of both hypertension diagnoses and complications were studied amongst African American women. The results of the study illustrated a measurable relationship between patients' perceptions of illness and compliance behavior. Specifically, the study measured folk beliefs of hypertension versus medical beliefs of hypertension amongst women diagnosed with the disease. There were two folk beliefs associated with hypertension:

1. "High blood", the belief that hypertension was a disease of the blood and heart in which the blood was too "hot," "rich," or "thick"; treated by dietary control and by various folk remedies. Patients believed these treatments cooled and thinned the blood, causing its level in the body to drop.
2. "High-pertension", a belief that hypertension was a disease "of the nerves" caused by stress, worry, and an anxious personality treated by a mitigation of stress and emotional excitement through control of emotions and the social environment.

Of the women who believed in either of the two folk illnesses, 63% complied poorly with antihypertensive treatment, compared with 27% of women who believed in the medical definition of hypertension.

As these studies have proven, there are many obstacles for drug compliance – especially amongst the African American community. As part of our HED programming we have developed a pilot program for Savannah, Georgia to reduce the financial barriers to drug compliance. With Triad Care we have created an innovative prescription discount card – a ready-to-use method for accessing prescription savings from 11-75% (average savings 53%) and rebates on over 1,000 brand drugs at 63,000 pharmacies nationwide with no expiration date, no limits on usage, and no fees for the entire family. This card can save thousands of dollars a year on healthcare expenses for you and your family. For details visit: www.NBCIperx.com.

Jeremy Patterson, PharmD, Director of Pharmacy Services at Triad Care says, "Drug compliance is one of the most important factors influencing positive outcomes. Triad Care uses a multi-layered approach to achieve better medication compliance and ultimately improve outcomes in our patients. Many patients have misconceptions about their medication therapy leading to poor medication adherence. Some of the barriers we often encounter include: patients don't understand the relationship between their chronic condition and their medication regimen, they experience intolerable side effects, they begin feeling better and decide the medication isn't necessary or they can't afford the continual cost of their drug therapy. Triad Care delivers the tools needed for patients to improve their compliance by providing education to patients, medication oversight and savings on prescription medications."

This program will begin in August, 2011 in Savannah. NBCI will coordinate the donation of these prescription discount cards with city and county health officials and elicit the cooperation of other relevant healthcare entities to maximize the impact of this important program. As with all HED initiatives, education is at the center of this initiative. Therefore, we realize the necessity of partnering with local hospitals, such as St. Joseph's Hospital and Georgia Regional Hospital and other medical professionals to guarantee a comprehensive community outreach. Additionally, NBCI will partner with black churches in Savannah to deliver this critical message.

Please join us for a **press conference on Tuesday, August 9, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.**, in the park adjacent to City Hall. In addition, we formally invite you to a **NBCI Drug Compliance Grand Rounds Symposium on Wednesday, August 10, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at First African Baptist Church.** The address for the NBCI Drug Compliance Grand Rounds Symposium is 23 Montgomery Street, Savannah, Georgia 31401 and you can call the church at 912.233.6597 for directions.

About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 34,000 African American and Latino churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI's mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches and the public. The National Black Church Initiative's methodology is utilizing faith and sound health science. NBCI offers faith-based, out-of-the-box and cutting edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. Visit our website at www.naltblackchurch.com.