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Liz Helms, Chair of the California Chronic Care Coalition Honored by the Pharmacy Foundation of California for Significant Contributions to Pharmacy-Related Public Health

(Sacramento, CA) – The Pharmacy Foundation of California honored Liz Helms, Chair of the California Chronic Care Coalition and President of the TMJ Society of California, with the Michelotti Public Health Prize. This award recognizes someone who has significantly contributed to furthering public health efforts related to pharmacy. She received the award during Outlook 2010 in Long Beach, the premier California pharmacy convention hosted annually by the California Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and the Pharmacy Foundation of California (PFC). In addition to the perpetual plaque that is housed at the CPhA/PFC office, Liz was awarded with a check for \$1,000.

“Liz Helms has spent a great deal of her life working to improve the nation’s health care system,” said Michael Negrete, CEO of the Pharmacy Foundation of California. “She has been a strong advocate for patients who suffer with chronic conditions and understands how pharmacists can help improve these conditions by being directly involved in their care. Her efforts will help save countless lives.”

Ms. Helms was nominated for the Michelotti Public Health Prize by Dr. Eleanor Vogt of the University of California, San Francisco’s School of Pharmacy and the Center for Consumer Self Care. Dr. Vogt cited her work in helping with the passage of a dozen health bills in California that provide patient protections, including the continuity of care legislation for prescription drugs as well as her work with the California Department of Managed Care’s Right Care Initiative (RCI). A principle of the RCI is to measurably improve clinical outcomes through enhancing the practice of evidence-based medicine in a collaborative, expert-based, public-private, multi-year effort. Through Ms. Helm’s experience and understanding of the important role pharmacist’s play in health care, she was able to help secure clinical pharmacy and pharmacy self-care management as part of the project.

In addition, she developed the “Wellness and Prevention Integration Act” through her work with the California Chronic Care Coalition. A major component of the Act included ensuring that Medication Therapy Management (MTM) is readily available to patients with chronic conditions and diseases. Through MTM practices, the pharmacist works collaboratively with a treating physician and provides individualized care to help reduce the risk of adverse events, including adverse drug interactions, improve compliance and ultimately better manage chronic conditions.

“I am honored to receive this award,” said Liz Helms. “Being a patient health care advocate has always been a passion of mine. To be recognized by my peers for helping make a positive change in the lives of those living with a chronic condition is extremely rewarding.”

The Michelotti Public Health Prize was established in 2005 to honor former California Pharmacists Association CEO, Carlo Michelotti, RPh, MPH.

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