

## **Institute for Safe Medication Practices**

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### ***Leader in Patient Safety Reaches Milestone* ISMP Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Becoming a Nonprofit Organization**

**HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa.**—The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP), the nation’s only nonprofit organization devoted entirely to medication error prevention and safe medication use, is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of incorporation this year. ISMP’s history in medication error prevention reaches back even further—the Institute represents nearly 30 total years of experience in helping healthcare professionals keep patients safe, and has become known and respected worldwide as the premier resource for impartial, timely, and accurate medication safety information.

ISMP’s error prevention efforts began in 1975 with a groundbreaking, continuing column in the journal *Hospital Pharmacy*. From that humble beginning, initially supported solely by volunteer efforts, the Institute has grown to an organization of more than 20 employees and offers a wide range of important programs and services, including: four unique medication safety newsletters for healthcare professionals and consumers that reach nearly a million total readers; influential educational conferences; on-site consulting for hospitals and other healthcare facilities; and a wholly owned subsidiary that assists the pharmaceutical industry in improving medical product safety.

Over its long history, ISMP has successfully advocated for improvements in drug names, labeling and packaging, technology, and medication practices that have led or could lead to medication errors. Just one example is stopping the direct administration of lidocaine concentrate prefilled syringes. In the wake of multiple deaths, ISMP convened a national meeting in 1989 that led to the removal of these products from the U.S. market.

Another cornerstone of the Institute’s medication safety efforts is a continuous, voluntary, and confidential practitioner error-reporting program to learn about errors happening across the nation, understand their causes, and share “lessons learned” with the healthcare community. Each year, the national Medication Errors Reporting Program (MERP), now operated by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) in cooperation with ISMP, receives nearly 1,000 error reports from healthcare professionals.

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ISMP also plays a key role in national efforts to improve medication use, testifying before Congress on safety issues, serving on national patient safety committees, and working with federal agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration. In 2002, ISMP was recognized by President Clinton for a partnership with the American Hospital Association to help U.S. hospitals examine and further improve medication safety.

“The vision, persistence, dedication, and cooperative spirit that has been shown by ISMP since the early days is an inspiration for all of us working to improve the well-being of patients—its day-to-day work in preventing medication errors has echoed around the world,” says Don Berwick, President and CEO, Institute for Healthcare Improvement. “ISMP has provided a voice in the wilderness, waking us up to the need to enhance medication safety. The Institute is a core supplier of knowledge and ideas and has set an impressive benchmark for those who want to help the industry change.”

During its year-long anniversary celebration, ISMP will be holding regional and national celebration events, publishing a historical retrospective on its work, and giving lectures/presentations on the past and future of medication safety. For more information, visit the Institute online at [www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org). To schedule an interview or receive more historical background on ISMP, including a timeline of major accomplishments, contact Renee Brehio at 704-321-3343 or e-mail to [rbrehio@ismp.org](mailto:rbrehio@ismp.org).

**About ISMP:** The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is a 501c(3) nonprofit organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, consumers, and professional organizations to provide education about medication errors and their prevention. ISMP represents nearly 30 years of experience in helping healthcare practitioners keep patients safe, and continues to lead efforts to improve the medication use process. In 2004, the Institute is celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its official incorporation as a nonprofit organization. For more information on ISMP, or its medication safety alert newsletters for healthcare professionals and consumers, visit [www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org)

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