

**Institute for Safe Medication Practices**  
**200 Lakeside Drive, Suite 200, Horsham, PA 19044**  
[www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org)

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CONTACT: Renee Brehio, Media Relations, ISMP  
704-831-8822, [rbrehio@ismp.org](mailto:rbrehio@ismp.org)

**ISMP Calls for More Timely and Direct Disclosure of  
New Information on Medication Errors to PSOs**

**Horsham, Pa---**The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is asking for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to expedite and more directly disclose crucial emerging information about medication errors and risks to the Institute and other patient safety organizations (PSOs) to better safeguard patients.

In an August 23, 2012 letter to the FDA, ISMP cited a recent example of the need for more communication between the agency and PSOs. A July letter from Novartis informed healthcare professionals that mix-ups between methylergonovine injection and hepatitis B vaccine have been reported to the FDA and the company, but the letter was never sent directly to ISMP or to any other PSO to our knowledge. A brief FDA listserv notice did not provide enough details about the problem for PSOs to give healthcare professionals any specific recommendations for effective prevention strategies.

Providing notification to ISMP and other PSOs of error reports and safety issues that merit an alert to the healthcare community would allow additional distribution channels, such as the National Alert Network (NAN) service, to be utilized in a timely fashion. In addition, ISMP and PSOs would be able to give healthcare professionals clinical perspective and prevention advice beyond what the FDA and manufacturers could offer.

The intent of the Patient Safety Act and Quality Improvement Act was to get information out through PSOs to prevent harm to patients. ISMP hopes that FDA will begin developing a process for more direct involvement of the PSOs in alerting all segments of the healthcare community to safety risks and problems.

A copy of ISMP's letter is online at: [www.ismp.org/pressroom/viewpoints/FDA-Letter-August-23-2012.pdf](http://www.ismp.org/pressroom/viewpoints/FDA-Letter-August-23-2012.pdf)

**About ISMP:** The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit charitable 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 more than 35 years of experience in helping healthcare practitioners keep patients safe, and continues to lead efforts to improve the medication use process. ISMP is a federally certified patient safety organization (PSO), providing healthcare practitioners and organizations with legal protection and confidentiality for patient safety data and error reports they submit to the Institute. For more information, visit [www.ismp.org](http://www.ismp.org)

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