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**CUSTOMER CHOICE PLAYS MORE SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN PRESCRIPTION DRUG
SELECTION, OPINION RESEARCH CORPORATION SURVEY FINDS**

Customers Know Best – Or Do They?

PRINCETON, NJ – June 6, 2007 — The US pharmaceutical industry should brace itself for change as Americans become more involved in choosing their own prescription drugs, according to a new study from Opinion Research Corporation. Over two thirds of respondents surveyed said they are “very comfortable” deciding on the brand name of drug they receive, and one in ten even asks their physician to prescribe a specific brand.

“The wealth of information easily available and frequently promoted to consumers is making them more comfortable when it comes to selecting their own prescription drugs,” said Linda Shea, Senior Vice President at Opinion Research USA. “This transformation is largely attributed to the changes in advertising regulations and the mass exposure that these demographics have to drug commercials.”

While nearly half of those polled said they rely on the Internet and television to learn about health-related ailments and potential treatments, only 56 percent who responded this way thought pharmaceutical companies should be allowed to promote drugs directly to customers. Physicians remain consumers’ top resource (71 percent), with pharmacists playing a much smaller role in a patient’s drug research – a function that was previously an integral part of their daily role.

“With the rapid growth in the number of prescription transactions and a shortage of pharmacists, the role of the pharmacist had to become more operational,” says Shea. “As technology evolves, I believe pharmacists will see their role becoming more influential and returning to a more advisory position. As a result, pharmacists may end up being one of the greatest influencers in the drug selection process.”

As drug costs increase, insurers are also taking more steps to intervene in the drug selection process. Seven percent of respondents reported that their health insurer specified which brand of drug they should receive. The intervention of insurers was not popular with the vast majority of respondents, with 72 percent saying that insurance companies should not be able to dictate the brand of drug they are ultimately prescribed.

About Opinion Research Corporation

Founded in 1938, Opinion Research Corporation, an infoUSA company, helps its clients grow their business by leveraging the insights of market research. The firm has been conducting national, speech reaction, state and flash/overnight polls for CNN since April 2006. To learn more, visit www.opinionresearch.com.

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