

One Million Prescriptions and Growing Strong

By Group Health Florida

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It began just a little over a year ago in Lakeland, Florida, a company determined to make a difference to the communities in which they were a part.

Publix's 684 Super Markets launched a free oral antibiotic drug program for the health and welfare of the areas they served. It started out modestly with a wish to make a difference to others. Who would have thought they would hit the one-millionth prescription of free antibiotics and wind up adding another drug to the roster?

The original free antibiotics being offered remain the same with one exception, and that exception is the addition of doxycycline hyclate caps. Other antibiotics include cephalexin, ciprofloxacin (with some exclusions), amoxicillin, penicillin VK, sulfamethoxazole / trimethoprim (SMZ-TMP), erythromycin (with some exceptions) and ampicillin. The millionth prescription is a remarkable landmark for the company, not to mention all the Floridians who have benefited from receiving free antibiotics.

The reason these particular drugs were chosen is that statistically they normally account for roughly 50 percent of the pediatric and generic prescriptions filled at Publix pharmacies.

The program is easy to access with patients only needing to provide the Publix pharmacist with their up to 14-day supply prescription. That's all people need and it is filled at no charge, with no limits on the number of scripts patients may fill. It also does not matter who the patient's health care insurance provider happens to be.

With health and wellness on everyone's mind these days, it doesn't hurt to have a proactive program like this in the community to promote wellness. It isn't often large companies like Publix weigh in with contributions like this that make an enormous difference to the people they serve.

The mere fact that over one million prescriptions have been filled is a testament to the necessity of something like this for health care consumers. It also teaches people the value of using generic drugs; something that is long overdue in the over-taxed and over-burdened American health care system.

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