



## 2009 ARMADA SUMMIT COUNTDOWN STARTS NOW!

### 5th Annual Armada Specialty Pharmacy Summit to be held March 10-13, 2009

Armada continues to play the lead role in advancing the interests of the Specialty Pharmacy channel... **Scheduled for early March 2009; this year's Armada Specialty Pharmacy Summit is expected to attract close to 1,000 attendees and will represent more than 50% of nation's total Specialty Pharmacy spend.**

That growing sound that you may be hearing is the "buzz" around Armada's upcoming Specialty Pharmacy Summit. As soon as word about the March, 2009 Summit was released inquiries from across the country began to pour in. Based on this early response, the 2009 Armada Summit is already on track to be a most memorable and valuable event for all attendees.

#### Market Insight and Vision

For many years now, Armada has been the lead advocate for advancing the interests of the Specialty Pharmacy marketplace. With the help of their rapidly growing national membership, Armada has made significant advancements in the positive perception and understanding of the Specialty Pharmacy channel. Gone are the days where this group was misunderstood, underappreciated or simply viewed as "traditional" fulfillment shops. The services of these specialized providers are now recognized and they are proving to be important patient management partners, sophisticated clinical program managers, and a potential source of highly valuable prescription data.

#### Leadership

Armada's vision isn't where the puck is now, but rather, as Gordy Howe said, "Where the puck is going." This leadership, or forward looking vision, is at the core of Armada's commitment to all industry stakeholders across the specialty pharmacy channel. And, these Annual Summits are clearly one of the most effective forums in which these issues can be raised and addressed.



#### Challenges

With each subsequent Summit, Armada has tackled incrementally more challenging industry issues. This forum will again pose questions that all participants need to answer for them to survive and thrive. A leading issue for the 2009 agenda is the Regulatory Environment, which runs the gamut from follow-on biologics, to access, to pricing methodologies, to restrictions on business relationships, and beyond.

The specialty product pipeline presents a host of strategic challenges for all industry stakeholders. The product mix includes many new high-tech orals, costly new infused therapies, and competing products in categories which were formerly sole-sourced. Add in the emergence of genetics testing and expanding personalized medicine, for example, you have an industry that must continually re-invent itself and adjust to the rapidly changing environment.

#### Expanded Agenda

Armada is extending this year's Summit by one full day. This expanded agenda will include additional industry lecture programs, added break-out sessions and increased

networking opportunities. Also new this year will be Live CE credits for pharmacists, nurses and specialty physicians! The 2009 Armada Specialty Pharmacy Summit is clearly one of the most essential and worthy meetings any specialty pharmacy industry participant can attend.

#### Strategic Focus

- Manufacturers are realizing that they can now access a seamless and defined group of specialty pharmacies that offer exceptional incremental value and efficiencies. The increased compliance and other service offerings of this group can be a key driver to deliver on strategic marketing goals.
- Payors are recognizing that an integrated national network of specialty pharmacies can expand patient reach; often opening access to manufacturer sponsored programs and simplify the contracting process. These highly efficient pharmacies can significantly help to reduce overall healthcare cost.
- Patients can benefit from easier prescription access and enhanced pharmacy service levels consistently delivered by these specialized providers. These pharmacies optimize health outcomes by being fully integrated into the continuum of quality patient care.
- Other stakeholders value this aggregated group of unique providers in as much that they can now efficiently and effectively tap into a rapidly growing \$60 billion market.

For more information visit [www.armadasummit.com](http://www.armadasummit.com) or call Armada Health Care today at 973-564-8004.

## CHRONIC DISEASE FORUM – PSORIASIS

Psoriasis is a chronic, immune-mediated disease, which results from inflammation in the skin and overproduction of skin cells that accumulate on the surface causing red, scaly plaques that itch and bleed. Up until next generation therapies came to market over recent years did anyone even think that Psoriasis was a chronic disease that fell under the specialty pharmacy umbrella. That is clearly no longer the case.

There is a lot more to Psoriasis than one would think, especially its pharmacology. Psoriasis is a chronic inflammation driven in part by tumor necrosis factor alpha, or TNF-alpha, a cytokine involved in the body's normal immune response. TNF-alpha is found at increased levels in psoriatic plaques and plays a crucial part in their formation and continued existence.

It is estimated that two percent of the US population has Psoriasis or 6,000,000 people, which is a lot of heartbreak nationally. And, of that segment, at least 30 percent have cases that are medically defined as moderate to severe. That translates into 1.8 million cases who may benefit from advanced therapy.

The door to advanced Psoriasis management was opened in the fall of 2003 with the approval of Raptiva. This biologic was an immediate success, offering patients who had suffered for years through other failed therapies, major improvements. It was also a subcutaneous injection which allowed patients to self-administer the therapy, an important convenience factor.

At the same time, a number of other TNF targeted therapies had already or were just coming to market, initially for another indication, Rheumatoid Arthritis. Well-established RA therapies such as Remicade and Enbrel were successful in obtaining new FDA approved indications for Crohn's Disease and Psoriasis. Add Humira to the field and the offensive line for Psoriasis was suddenly ready to compete aggressively in the specialty pharmacy Super Bowl.

### Market Uptake – Cost – and Payor Pushback

As patients began learning about the effectiveness of these therapies prescribers began writing scripts by the bushel full. At a cost of between \$25,000 and \$45,000 annually, Psoriasis therapy was suddenly squarely in the bull's eye of payors nationally.

The fine line between mild and moderate Psoriasis was a line often crossed by prescribers, at least in the payors' eyes. Rigid guidelines were issued and prior-authorizations put a lid on 'excessive' utilization. Payors also pushed hard for specialists to try older and cheaper drugs such as Methotrexate and Cyclosporine. But, while Methotrexate therapy only costs about \$600 a year, it can cause liver damage. And, cyclosporine, at a few thousand annually, can damage the kidneys.



### What's On the Horizon?

Drugs like Enbrel and Remicade are blockbusters. Their manufacturers are desperate to replace revenues being lost to other 'star' drugs going off patent so competition among the leading therapies will continue to be fierce. Add to the mix a new player onto the field, a product from Centocor which is already FDA approved and should be on the market very soon. Presently called Ustekinumab, this new competitor is a once a month sub-q product that targets two types of interleukine, apparently a major advancement over the current technology producing never before seen therapeutic benefits. However, the cost of progress may be hard for payors to swallow once pricing is announced.

### Role of Specialty Pharmacy

Specialty pharmacies have long played an important role in supporting Psoriasis therapy. Whether distributing infused product to physicians & home care, or syringes for sub-q administration, specialty pharmacies create an important bridge to patients. After many years with little or no therapeutic relief, Psoriasis patients are challenged physically, emotionally and financially. Specialty pharmacies help these patients regain control of their lives and self-esteem.

### *Editorial Support provided by:*

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**Specialty Pharmacy Currents** is published Quarterly by Armada Health Care, 51 JFK Parkway, Short Hills, NJ 07078 and produced by Print Tech, Mountainside, NJ.

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## Spotlight on Armada Members

### Axium Healthcare Pharmacy

Beginning in the mid-1990's, the Orlando, FL area has emerged as the epicenter of specialty pharmacy in the nation. Since then, no fewer than twelve specialty pharmacies have competed head to head, both regionally and nationally, and included goliath names like Curascript, Priority, Aetna, Wal-Mart, among them. Yet, in spite of this highly competitive Cat-5 hurricane of providers in FL, Axium Healthcare Pharmacy decided to jump in and has not only survived but thrived impressively.

From a small 3,000 sq ft startup operation, Axium has grown into one of the largest independent specialty pharmacies in the country. The original quarters were quickly outgrown as Axium now conducts primary operations out its new 45,000 sq ft corporate headquarters & state-of-the-art pharmacy facility in Lake Mary, FL.

Axium knows how to grow their business – the hard way – through persistence and strong physician referral relationships. “Total commitment to our physicians and patients remains at the core of the Axium company mission statement,” said Greg Vaughn, Executive Vice President. “This simple, but important, concept has enabled us to service more than 50,000 patients on a nationwide basis across multiple chronic disease categories.”

Axium today holds licenses or is allowed to dispense prescriptions to patients in all 50 states. They recognized that geographic expansion was also a critical strategic component to future growth. Regional pharmacies were recently added in Tennessee and Mississippi, areas thought to be underserved by specialty pharmacy. Axium also sees a blossoming opportunity in the Caribbean and now operates Axium Healthcare Puerto Rico, a stand alone specialty pharmacy located on the island. Additionally, expert compounding services are provided from a state-of-the-art, USP 727 Class 100 clean room facility, further offering referring physicians even broader solutions to help manage any patients with specialty needs.

#### The Value of Therapy Management

Value in specialty pharmacy is an increasingly important payor concern. Axium now offers a menu of clinically based programs that deliver value through their Visions Therapy Management Programs. These specialty programs deliver improved clinical and financial outcomes in HCV, RA, HIV/AIDS, Skin disorders, Growth Deficiency, MS, Bleeding disorders, Cancer, and other specialized disease categories.

#### Clinical Trial Partner

In January, 2008 Axium achieved an important milestone by landing a clinical trial management contract for Oxabact™, manufactured by Sweden's OxThera, Inc. This product has an indication for Primary Hyperoxaluria (PH), a rare pediatric genetic disease, with only 1,000 patients in the US. Oxabact™ is a capsulated bacterium that requires frozen storage and strict refrigerated shipment monitoring. Axium will be working in conjunction with OxThera and the Mayo Clinic in this Phase III clinical trial. “We are excited about the opportunity to be working with OxThera in the drug management of their Phase III clinical trial for Oxabact. It will also be an honor working on this project with the prestigious Mayo Clinic”, said Mark Montgomery, President & CEO of Axium.

#### Poised for the Future

The expert management team at Axium knows that the specialty pharmacy market will continue to be ever more challenging in the coming years and cost control will be key. Greg Vaughn commented, “We need to position ourselves for anything that comes our way, and Armada Health Care is a great partner to help us with contract pricing and new programs that help expand our markets. Specialty is one business where you want all the help you can get.”



*Axium's Management Team  
(from left to right: Bill Bolgar, Pharm D., VP of Corporate Development, Bill Bucher, CFO  
Mark Montgomery, President & CEO, Lien Pham,  
Pharm D, VP of Pharmacy Operations, and Greg  
Vaughn, EVP)*



## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

### PREZISTA® (darunavir)

Tibotec Therapeutics

The FDA has granted PREZISTA® (darunavir) tablets, a protease inhibitor, approval for an expanded indication for once-daily dosing as part of HIV combination therapy in treatment-naïve adults (those who have never taken HIV medication before). The FDA also granted traditional (full) approval to PREZISTA® as twice-daily for use in treatment-experienced adult patients. PREZISTA® was developed by Tibotec Pharmaceuticals and is marketed in the U.S. by Tibotec Therapeutics, a division of Ortho Biotech Products, L.P.

Recommended dosing for treatment-naïve adult patients is 800 mg (two 400 mg tablets) taken with 100 mg ritonavir once daily. The new 400 mg tablet will be available by November 1. For treatment-experienced adult patients, the dosing for PREZISTA® remains 600 mg taken with 100 mg ritonavir twice daily. PREZISTA® must be taken with food and in combination with other ARVs. PREZISTA® is not recommended for use in patients with severe hepatic impairment. Tibotec will discontinue production of the 300 mg tablet of PREZISTA® as a result of decreasing demand following the introduction of the 600 mg tablet earlier this year. The 600 mg tablet allows treatment-experienced adult patients who currently take two 300 mg of PREZISTA® twice daily to now take one 600 mg tablet twice daily.



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*Save the Date!*  
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