

Doctors complain of iPledge problems

September 6 2006

Dermatologists have complained that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's iPledge program is delaying treatment for patients who require the drug Accutane.

The program, which was adapted six months ago to prevent the drug from causing birth defects in pregnant women, requires registration of wholesalers, pharmacists, doctors and patients involved with it. However, many doctors complain the program's customer service is difficult to deal with and often full of misinformation, The Washington Post reported Wednesday.

The American Academy of Dermatology released a survey last week reporting 90 percent of 378 physicians polled over the phone said they had experienced problems with the program. More than 50 percent of the polled doctors said treatment had been delayed for some patients because problems with the program prevented them from obtaining the prescription within seven days, and 39 percent said patients had complained of technical problems using the program's Web site.

Many doctors have called for the program to be revised.

"Every single one of my patients has had a problem" said dermatologist Sandra Read of the AAD board. "I don't care how smart you are -- this is an extremely confusing program with a very steep learning curve."

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Citation: Doctors complain of iPledge problems (2006, September 6) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-09-doctors-ipledge-problems.html>

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