

# **Institute for Safe Medication Practices**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ISMP Announces Its Award Recipients**

Huntingdon Valley, PA, May 28, 2002----- The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is proud to announce that ISMP President, Michael R. Cohen and ISMP Vice President Judy Smetzer, RN, BSN have been named recipients of national awards for their work in the areas of medication safety and quality improvement.

Cohen, president and founder of ISMP, is the winner of this year's Harvey A.K. Whitney Lecture Award presented in recognition of his lifelong contributions to the pharmacy profession. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) presents the Whitney award in recognition of an individual's accomplishments benefiting health-system pharmacy, humanity, and the public health. To ASHP members, the Whitney Lecture Award is recognized as pharmacy's highest honor.

Cohen, an adjunct associate professor of pharmacy at Temple University School of Pharmacy, actively works with pharmacists, nurses, doctors and pharmaceutical manufacturers to improve the storage, ordering, dispensing, labeling, design and manufacture of pharmaceutical products in order to reduce the incidence of medication errors.

The Whitney Lecture Award was established in 1950 by the Michigan Society of Hospital (now Health-System) Pharmacists and is named in honor of Harvey A.K. Whitney, a pioneer in the practice of hospital pharmacy. Whitney was an editor, author, educator, practitioner, and hospital pharmacy leader credited with establishing the first pharmacy internship program in Michigan in 1927

Cohen will receive his award at the annual meeting of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) on June 4, 2002 in Baltimore, MD.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Page 2)

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Smetzer, Vice President at ISMP, was named this year's winner of the prestigious Avedis Donabedian Award from the American Public Health Association (APHA) in recognition of her ongoing work in educating healthcare professionals in the area of quality improvement. She has served as a risk management consultant for both long term and community based health care organizations. In addition, many of her articles on medication error prevention are published in peer-reviewed journals.

Prior to joining ISMP she served as Associate Vice President of St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital in Quakertown, PA. During her 23-year career, Smetzer has advanced from a staff nurse to various management positions, increasingly focusing on quality improvement and risk management.

The Donabedian Award was established to honor individuals who make outstanding contributions to the field of quality assurance and quality improvement. The award is named after Avedis Donabedian, MD, MPH the acknowledged intellectual father of concepts and methods related to quality in health care. The award is presented to an individual whose work builds on Donabedian's precepts and has significantly advanced the field through innovative ideas and interventions.

Smetzer is the fourth winner of the Donabedian, joining other notables such as Harvard University's Lucian Leape, MD and Donald Berwick, MD. She will be formally presented with the award in November when the APHA holds its annual convention in Philadelphia.

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### **About the Institute for Safe Medication Practices**

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is a nonprofit organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, professional organizations and the pharmaceutical industry to provide education about adverse drug events and their prevention. The Institute provides an independent review of medication errors that have been voluntarily submitted by practitioners to a national Medication Errors Reporting Program (MERP) operated by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) in the USA. Information from the reports may be used by USP to impact on drug standards. All information derived from the MERP is shared with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and pharmaceutical companies whose products are mentioned in reports. The Institute is an FDA MEDWATCH partner and regularly communicates with the FDA to help to prevent medication errors. The Institute encourages the appropriate reporting of medication errors to the MEDWATCH Program.

ISMP is dedicated to the safe use of medications through improvements in drug distribution, naming, packaging, labeling, and delivery system design. The organization has established a national advisory board of practitioners to assist in problem solving.