



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## HEALTHCARE VETERAN & FORMER LILLY USA PRESIDENT ALEX AZAR TO KEYNOTE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPECIALTY PHARMACY'S FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE FROM SEPT. 18 - 20

*Over 1,000 Leaders in Healthcare to Convene in Washington, DC for Three-Day  
Conference, Including Second Specialty Pharmacy Law Conference &  
Women in Specialty Pharmacy Lunch*

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**WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 27, 2017)** – Pharmaceutical executive, healthcare industry leader, and former president of [Lilly USA](#), Alex Azar, will kick off the fifth annual [National Association of Specialty Pharmacy \(NASP\)](#) conference with a keynote speech on Tuesday, Sept. 19 in Washington, D.C. The conference will kick off with NASP's second annual Legal Day on Monday, Sept. 18, followed by two days of thought-provoking discussions on the state of specialty pharmacy, in addition to networking opportunities and meetings among leaders in healthcare.

"I'm honored to keynote NASP's annual conference, and hope to inspire ongoing innovation and top-notch patient support from specialty pharmacy's industry leaders," said **Alex Azar**, the Chairman of Seraphim Strategies, who served as president of Lilly from 2012 – 2017. "Specialty pharmacies and pharmacists are the best when it comes to providing the groundbreaking drug therapies, resources and white-glove services that sick Americans need and deserve to live their best lives."

Azar joined Lilly USA, the largest affiliate of global biopharmaceutical leader Eli Lilly and Company, in 2007. Previously, he served as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). His keynote will provide members with an update on all aspects of specialty pharmacy, including the evolution of the market, impact of specialty pharmacy on patients, and national legislative and regulatory policy.

"Millions of Americans suffer from some of the most devastating and complex diseases, depending on specialty pharmacists to deliver knowledgeable, skilled and caring services to help them manage their sickness," said **Rebecca Shanahan, NASP President**. "This year's conference features an all-star lineup, including healthcare veteran Alex Azar, to foster meaningful discussion and ideas around developments in the specialty pharmacy ecosystem."

NASP is excited to bring back by popular demand the "Women in Specialty Pharmacy" networking lunch on Tuesday, Sept. 19, which was founded by Suzette Di Mascio, President & CEO of the CSI Specialty Group. Women are invited for networking and dynamic conversation on experiences and best practices for navigating the workplace; promoting the education and certification of female pharmacists; and elevating female leaders in specialty pharmacy.

The three-day conference will take place from Sept. 18 through Sept. 20 at the Marriot Wardman Park in Washington, D.C, offering Continuing Education (CE) credits for both legal day attendees, as well as for NASP members attending the following two-day conference. Additionally, a one-day prep course will be offered to pharmacists studying for Certified Specialty Pharmacist certification. NASP members are encouraged to [register now](#) to reserve their spot.

**Specialty Pharmacy** | Specialty pharmacy provides medications to treat patients with serious, chronic, rare, progressive, or debilitating or fatal if left untreated or undertreated. According to the [Drug Channels Institute](#) and other sources, specialty pharmacy drugs will represent 44% of the U.S. drug spend by the year 2020. Examples of illnesses that require specialty medications include cancer, hepatitis C, infectious disease, infertility, Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, Cystic Fibrosis, organ transplantation, human growth hormone deficiencies, hemophilia, and other bleeding disorders.

**Direct and Indirect Remuneration (DIR) fees** | One of the chief challenges facing the industry right now is: how to help CMS and Congress stop big PBMs from imposing unfair DIR fees that increase prescription drug costs for seniors and crush specialty pharmacy's ability to provide the care that sick seniors need. DIR fees are increasingly egregious and impose negative consequences by inflating prescription drug costs for the sickest, most vulnerable seniors – the very patients the Medicare Part D program was designed to protect. Not only that, DIR fees threaten the specialty pharmacies that serve the unique needs of patients living with complex, life-altering, and often life-threatening diseases.

**National Association for Specialty Pharmacy (NASP)** | NASP was founded in 2012 and is the only national trade association that represents specialty pharmacy, serving as the leading educational resource and national advocate for specialty pharmacy healthcare professionals and patients alike. In addition to providing medications to severely ill patients, specialty pharmacy also features support programs and services to ensure patients maximize the benefit from their medication, therapies and services, working to ease the treatment burden for patients, families and caregivers as they work to manage these tough conditions.

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