

AAD Phasing Out 'Seal of Recognition' Program

BY ALICIA AULT

The American Academy of Dermatology is phasing out its "Seal of Recognition" program, partly because a low participation rate meant that it was not meeting the AAD's goals, according to AAD President David Pariser.

In fact, "the program costs exceeded revenue," Dr. Pariser said in an interview, which was not mentioned in the initial AAD statement announcing the phase-out.

The academy said it was ending the program because it expected the Food and Drug Administration to soon issue sunscreen labeling criteria that would "likely be aligned with the stringent criteria of the AAD Seal of Recognition



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DR. PARISER

program." The FDA sunscreen rules have been in the works for almost a decade.

Dr. Pariser said that when the AAD Board first discussed ending the sunscreen program, public statements made by the FDA suggested that the rules would be issued by the end of 2009. The FDA has since announced that it may not release the guidelines until spring.

Even so, once the FDA acts, the rules are "likely to diminish the need" for the AAD program, he said.

More importantly, the program did not generate money to fund skin cancer awareness programs, as had been planned. Manufacturers paid a \$5,000 application fee, followed by a \$10,000 annual licensing fee upon approval.

As of September 2009, six sunscreens carried the Seal of Recognition: Amino-Genesis Anti-Aging Day Cream with SPF 18, AminoGenesis Derma Scyne Wrinkle Arrest with SPF 18, Coolibar Sun Protection Clothing UPF 50+, Aveeno Continuous Protection Sunblock SPF 55, Aveeno Baby Continuous Protection Sunblock SPF 55, and Mederma Cream plus SPF 30.

\$1.6 Million Rosacea Grant Is Awarded

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has awarded \$1.6 million to Signum Biosciences Inc. The company will use the grant to continue its development of topical STM (signal transduction modulator) anti-inflammatory technology for the treatment of rosacea. For more information, contact Signum at www.signumbiosciences.com.

The AAD will not accept any new applications. Products that currently carry the AAD's imprimatur will continue to have that label until the end of each product's 2-year recognition period.

Despite losing a potentially dedicated source of funding for skin cancer awareness, the AAD will not stop its public education efforts. It will continue to fund education and awareness through its general operating fund, Dr. Pariser said.

The AAD began the Seal of Recognition program in 2007 and envisioned that it would eventually be applied to cosmetics, moisturizers, clothing, hats, laundry additives, shade structures, and window films and tints meeting evidence-based criteria for reducing sun exposure to consumers.

The organization noted it started the program because a survey found that 86% of AAD members thought the Seal

of Recognition would help consumers make better-informed choices.

The program, though, was met with disapproval from many dermatologists. Those who opposed the seal said that it gave the appearance of a conflict of interest since the AAD often promotes sunscreens to consumers.

Dr. Pariser said that the AAD had not received any complaints about the program in the past year.

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