Practical Pearls In This Issue

When determining the content for your practice newsletter, in addition to your featured articles, include regular standing topics or “departments” in each issue, such as Q&A or FAQ sections, personal column from the physician/administrator, calendar, or factoid/tip. These departments provide a degree of continuity and uniformity to your newsletter and serve as anchors for your ever-changing feature article(s).

There is one treatment that is effective in all of your patients with severe skin disease—your touch. By placing your hand on the arm of your patient, you instantly show your acceptance of that patient, and it helps to momentarily erase the differences that they feel everyday.

You may waive a Medicare patient’s deductible and/or co-pay if the individual is in financial need. There is no stated income/asset test for financial need, and there are no standard forms to complete. To ensure consistency and aid documentation, establish and use a criterion for need that can be the same with each patient, such as the previous year’s income tax return.

If green tea extract is used as an additive to a topical preparation, the formulation must contain an antioxidant such as butylated hydroxytoluene that will stabilize the green tea.

Nurses who administer infliximab in the office setting should be certified to administer intravenous infusions, as at free-standing infusion centers, and ideally to perform advanced cardiac life support. Contact state boards of nursing for local licensing requirements regarding the administration of intravenous medications. A physician should always be available throughout the infusion session.

Ethnic stores in larger urban areas in the US often carry products containing high concentrations of hydroquinones and potent corticosteroids, which carry a risk of exogenous ochronosis. These products are sold without prescription. Patients must be warned about the possible adverse effects of these products.

To keep newsletter printing costs down, get quotes from multiple print shops; choose two-tone printing rather than full-color printing; use standard size paper; select appropriate paper whiteness, weight, and coating; and avoid bleeds. Also, always ask your printer for suggestions to reduce printing costs.

Take the extra time during your visit with children with severe skin disease to ask them how they are doing, how their lives are going, and what they are looking forward to in the future. Not only will this help you to get to know your patient, it will also enhance the child’s overall treatment.

Co-pays may create barriers not only for psoriasis patients seeking biologic therapy but also for patients seeking phototherapy. “Most insurance plans charge a co-pay for every visit,” says Dr. Paisser. “A patient is coming in three times a week and has a $30 or $40 co-pay—that’s $90 or $120 times three a week. There are a lot of people who just can’t afford that.”