

Our Shared Pharmacy Community

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Despite being surrounded by people and action, those working in healthcare can sometimes experience it as a lonely place. The hustle and pace of our work are dizzying at times, and the ability to home in and focus amid the chaos is a skill at which we excel. But it can also mean that we put on our blinders and feel that we have to tackle our greatest problems alone.

Yet as I reflect on the past three years sitting on the Executive Committee of the Canadian Society of Healthcare-Systems Pharmacy (CSHP), I've lost track of how many times I've thought, "Wow, we really are the same!" Many of our experiences are shared across the country, and there is strength in our collective efforts to collaborate and build community together. It's the reason we have identified "Community" as a key pillar in our new strategic plan—we are stronger together, and our shared voice can make a difference in how pharmacy professionals care for patients in all parts of our country.

In December, I had the opportunity to represent CSHP at the Midyear Clinical Meeting of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), specifically at the international pharmacy leaders meeting. The people in the room were from 12 countries, spanning 5 continents, and all were sharing their successes and challenges. Once again, I was stuck by that thought—"Wow, we really are the same!"—more often than I expected. Scope of pharmacist practice, drug shortages, advancing pharmacy technician practice, environmental sustainability, advanced certification and training programs, health human resources—all of these issues bubbled to the top of many delegate reports at the meeting. Our colleagues in Australia even changed their organization's name this past year, from Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia to Advanced Pharmacy Australia, for similar reasons to those underlying our own name change. There were more similarities in the room than there were differences, and it was inspiring to know that CSHP is working at the forefront of contemporary issues in the profession of pharmacy. We do excellent work and are looked to as a leader in pharmacy practice, a role that each and every one of our members is encouraged to embrace.

The international meeting also served as a point of reflection, at a time when we have set our new direction for CSHP. Have we missed the mark in our key result areas or aspirational goals? No, we most certainly have not! Our strategic plan speaks to so many of the issues raised by our colleagues from across the globe who were present at the Midyear Clinical

Meeting. Yes, we've framed them in a local context, but their reach goes far beyond the local level. For example, the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) began a project to update the Basel Statements on the Future of Hospital Pharmacy in 2023, and Advanced Pharmacy Australia recently published their revised clinical pharmacy practice standards. CSHP's newly formed Professional Practice Advisory Committee is embarking on an ambitious plan to create, review, and revise our professional practice guiding documents and official resources to ensure they are contemporary and aligned with current best practices. Taiwan, Indonesia, Brazil, Spain, and the United States are all exploring or offering various new training programs for pharmacy professionals; we too are investigating what this could mean for CSHP in a Canadian context. Australia is amplifying the unique role that pharmacists play in deprescribing and is sharing with the public the positive impact that deprescribing can have on environmental sustainability; CSHP's work with Choosing Wisely Canada, specifically the climate-conscious statements relevant to hospital pharmacy, speaks to deprescribing and so much more. This is only a small snapshot of the great work in which pharmacy professionals are engaged across the world, not an all-encompassing review of global pharmacy practice models. Nonetheless, it is inspiring to see us all, in our own ways, strive toward the shared goal of advancing patient care through excellence in pharmacy practice.

CSHP and its members are leaders in pharmacy practice and are advancing the profession of pharmacy locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. During Pharmacy Appreciation Month this March, take a moment to celebrate our collective successes and know that you are making a difference! Share your gratitude for your community. You are not alone, and together we are accomplishing so much for and with each other to ensure that all people in Canada receive the best pharmacy care—when, where and how they need it—across our healthcare systems.



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