

Are You a Member of the PSN Family?

Carolyn Bornstein

In 2001, CSHP established 10 Pharmacy Specialty Networks (PSNs) to facilitate information-sharing among CSHP members practising in a specialty. That first group of PSNs catered to pharmacists in critical care, cardiology, and parenteral services. Other PSNs allowed communication among pharmacy students, hospital pharmacy residents, clinical pharmacy consultants, and pharmacists working in small hospitals. Over the past 7 years, the demand for PSNs has grown, and the number of networks is currently 22. PSNs promote practice excellence and the enhancement of patient-centred pharmacy practice through information-sharing, educational events, and facilitation of research.

CSHP's Vision 2006 had a focus on membership services that prompted a PSN review, which began in 2004. The PSN Review Committee recently completed its work, which has resulted in new guidelines, policies, and procedures related to the mission, structure, formation, and dissolution of PSNs, as well as their operation: communication strategies, office resources, solicitation and management of funds, PSN endorsement and representation of CSHP, PSN-initiated research, and rules of conduct for the PSN listservs. These documents are available in the revised PSN Guide, which can be found in the CSHP Network section of the CSHP website (under "Pharmacy Specialty Networks"). The new terms of reference of the PSN Coordinating Committee have all PSN chairs as members. This committee approves the formation and dissolution of PSNs (according to CSHP-approved criteria). Very soon, enhancements of the CSHP website will allow PSN listservs to be hosted by CSHP instead of Yahoo.

Participating in and eventually chairing the PSN review was a very exciting and rewarding experience for me. I had the opportunity to interact with some very inspiring practice leaders, the past and present Chairs of our PSNs. These dedicated volunteers have created valuable tools for their fellow PSN members. Special thanks go to the American College of Clinical Pharmacy, whose Practice and Research Network handbook inspired some of the new PSN guidelines.

The results of the PSN Review speak for themselves. The Cardiology PSN recently reviewed guidelines on dyslipidemia that CSHP had been asked to endorse. PSN-

initiated research will follow new policies and procedures. PSN chairs can request PSN-related topics and speakers for CSHP educational conferences. Each PSN must hold an annual business meeting, either in person or by teleconference. PSN web pages provide valuable practice resources. Check out activity highlights in the CSHP Network section of the CSHP website.



Another exciting development is the creation of joint or shared PSNs with other pharmacy associations. Most recently, in January 2007, the Primary Care PSN was established in partnership with the Canadian Pharmacists Association. Members of both organizations can enroll in this PSN, and the response has been overwhelming! Where else can you post a question about the role of a pharmacist in primary care and receive responses almost immediately that include guidelines, policies and procedures, and links to references, online tools, and other resources? One PSN member, D. Jorgenson, of West Winds Primary Health Centre in Saskatchewan, recently posted the following message:

I thank CSHP and CPhA for hosting this PSN. Within hours of posting a question I am overloaded with responses. What a great resource and one of many reminders that my membership dues are well spent!!

Access to the PSNs is a CSHP membership benefit that is available at no extra cost. Apply online at http://www.cshp.ca/cshpNetwork/psn/psn-application_e.asp. Because CSHP members may enroll in multiple PSNs, the current count of 2100 PSN registrants actually represents just 800 CSHP members (30% of total Society membership). If you're not part of the PSN family yet, what are you waiting for?

Carolyn Bornstein, BScPhm, ACPR, FCSHP, is President and Vision Liaison for CSHP. She is also Chair of the Pharmacy Specialty Networks Coordinating Committee.