

Riding the Waves . . . Team CSHP in Action

James L. Mann

As summer approaches and we emerge from our first full year of operation with Team CSHP, our sights turn to the new CSHP membership year. CSHP Council and many of your fellow members have been hard at work, building on our Society's initiatives, responding to your ideas and priorities, and working to transform the profession of pharmacy.

As we celebrate our 55th anniversary, we can take pride in a history that has brought us to the forefront of contemporary issues — more than half a century of commitment to leading the way on issues affecting patients, pharmacists, and Canadian health care.

Throughout the presidential year of Margaret Gray, 2001/2002, CSHP has been active in a number of professional and public forums. Our initiative for

Pharmacy Awareness Week 2002 focused on the issue of prescriptive authority. The official launch of the CSHP Information Paper on this topic at February's Professional Practice Conference (PPC) was followed by an aggressive awareness and public relations campaign, the second of at least 3 anticipated media campaigns related to CSHP Information Papers. Along with the papers already released — **Pharmacist Prescribing within a Health Care Facility** and **The Role of the Pharmacy**



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Technician — a paper on **The Potential Impact of Implementing an Entry-level Doctor of Pharmacy Degree in Canada** is scheduled for release later this year.

Each of these documents has been created by a CSHP task force, and delegates, along with their individual branch councils, have spearheaded the communication of these messages to provincial organizations and members across the country. Together, these national and branch efforts have achieved a significant degree of visibility for both the Society and the issues at hand. Chief among this publicity was a full-page feature on prescriptive authority in the *Calgary Herald*, featuring Past President Linda Poloway.

The **role of pharmacy technicians** is still a dynamic issue at the forefront of the collective CSHP consciousness. Immediately following the November 2001 publication of our Information Paper on the Role of the Pharmacy Technician, in the Winter 2001 issue of *CJHP*, CSHP joined a national working group investigating technician roles and responsibilities. Our representatives, working with a group that includes other national and provincial pharmacy organizations, are championing the unique needs and perspectives of hospital pharmacy throughout these discussions. Topics at the table include technician certification and practical implications for the individual and the employer, as well as academic accreditation of training programs for pharmacy technicians.

All participants have recognized the efforts of the Ontario College of Pharmacy in drafting a comprehensive technician competency document. As well, the group has acknowledged the strong programs that already exist, through the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada for pharmacist examination and within the Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs for the accreditation of educational programs at our 9 faculties of pharmacy. All signs indicate that the Ontario College of Pharmacy will regulate Ontario technicians in the not-distant future. However, use of this certification by individuals and employers will remain voluntary.

CSHP has also demonstrated its commitment to the professional development of technicians, as illustrated by Margaret Colquhoun's presentation at PPC 2002,

"Optimizing and Creating Roles for Technicians", as well as presentations at this year's upcoming Annual General Meeting, which will include "Innovative Roles for Pharmacy Technicians". As well, the Society continues to build a strong relationship with the Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians through joint officer meetings, contributions to the Association's newsletter, *the mortar*, and other demonstrations of reciprocal support. As always, CSHP promotes pharmacy technicians as integral members of the optimal pharmacy team.

CSHP continues to participate in the Human Resources Development Canada **sectoral study regarding the pharmacist shortage in Canada**. As signatories and members of both the steering committee and executive working group, we continue to investigate solutions for hospital pharmacy. Evidence from across the country indicates that the current shortage is neither a random blip nor a short-term health care issue. Likewise, the crisis is global in scope. As outlined in a recent report by the American Hospital Association, the pharmacist shortage ranks second only to that of nurses with respect to its impact on the provision of hospital-based, high-quality health care.¹

Members will be interested to know that CSHP continues to play an active role on at least 2 national **medication error initiatives** — Health Canada's effort to develop a voluntary national reporting program and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons' work to facilitate a multidisciplinary examination of the patient safety issue, of which medication errors form a significant component. The Health Canada effort has produced an interim report and business plan proposal, which we anticipate will unfold over the next couple of years. The patient safety program is being managed through 5 separate working groups; CSHP members are represented on each. Bonnie Salsman, former director of pharmacy at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and a CSHP past president, represents the Society on both of these steering committees.

The **National Pharmacy Forum**, an annual event sponsored by CSHP and the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA), took place on Sunday, May 12, 2002, during the CPhA Annual Meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Linda Poloway chaired this year's program,



which focused on “Scope of Practice”. National and provincial pharmacy association representatives were invited to participate in this timely and often “out of the box, pushing the envelope” discussion. Nick Honcharik, Manitoba Branch Delegate, and I served as CSHP’s representatives. Speakers included Marita Zaffiro, an innovative community pharmacist practitioner from Hamilton, Ontario; Kim Buzak, a prominent hospital pharmacist with a specialty practice in Edmonton, Alberta; and Della Croteau, deputy registrar from the Ontario College of Pharmacy, who addressed the topic from a regulatory perspective.

By now, members will have received their final programs for the **55th Annual General Meeting and Educational Sessions**, which will take place from August 10 to 13, 2002, in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia. CSHP’s Educational Services Committee, chaired by Heather Kertland, has assembled an educational program that once again promises exceptional faculty and content that will both challenge and inform. Host cochairs Louanne Twaites and Ken McGregor have also been hard at work with their own committee, putting together an extraordinary social program. This conference offers to members innumerable opportunities to celebrate the past, discover tomorrow, and participate in their Society — we look forward to seeing you in Vancouver.

From here forward, we anticipate continued growth and success for CSHP. The efforts outlined above illustrate the proactive and exemplary work of our members on behalf of the Society and the profession of pharmacy. We have come a long way in 55 years. We enjoy an exceptionally strong and committed base of members and volunteers, we have unprecedented means for communicating both internally and externally, and we claim a unique voice within the profession. June is membership month, so if you haven’t renewed your membership yet, please take a minute to do so. Join and be heard.

If you would like more information about these or other issues, please contact the National Office or your Branch delegate.

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Reference

1. AHA Commission on Workforce for Hospitals and Health Systems. *In our hands. How hospital leaders can build a thriving workforce*. Chicago (IL): American Hospital Association; 2002 Apr. Available from: <http://www.aha.org/workforce/commission/InOurHands.asp> (accessed 2002 May 15).

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