

Looking Back with Pride, Looking Ahead with Anticipation

Richard Jones

As I take a break from planning next year's budget for my hospital to write this article for *CJHP*, I find myself reflecting on all that has occurred over the past year, both within CSHP and more broadly in our profession here in Canada. At the national level, "Moving Forward: Pharmacy Human Resources for the Future" has been completed, and both CSHP 2015 and the Blueprint for Pharmacy have been launched. These important projects are demonstrating that Canadian society can make better use of the knowledge and skills of pharmacists in the public interest, which was originally highlighted in the Romano Commission's Report on the Future of Health Care in Canada (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/hhr-rhs/strateg/romanow-eng.php>). The first pharmacists to undertake the extra training required for additional prescribing authorization in Alberta have now graduated, and Ontario is on the cusp of registering pharmacy technicians. Also in the realm of education, the profession is migrating toward having the PharmD as the initial pharmacy degree, and a new pharmacy school has been opened at the University of Waterloo. These are but a few of the recent milestones that are bringing us to a critical juncture in our profession in Canada. Our value as medication therapy clinicians is finally being recognized, and our future is secure and robust!

With this strong support in the public and political domains, now is the time for all pharmacists to focus on using and honing the skills we have developed through our training and to regularly apply them in our respective practice settings. It is our individual and collective responsibility to grasp this opportunity and to realize the full potential of our role as essential members of the collaborative health care team. At no time in the history of hospital pharmacy in Canada have pharmacists had as much support and recognition or been as strongly

embraced within the care team. Like all of my administrative pharmacist peers, I have a duty to ensure that pharmacists working on the front lines, interacting directly with patients, physicians, and nurses, have the support and opportunity to fulfill the dream of

being recognized as essential and respected members of the health care team, with particular responsibility for managing medication therapy.

Now that the gate is open, it is up to us to work together on all fronts to achieve whatever we can, offering an expanded model of care and a variety of options for the Canadian public. We are well along on this path in hospitals, but there is room to grow and extend full services to all patients, to achieve continuity of care with our colleagues working in the community as the patient transitions through different care settings, and to engage with policy and operational decision-makers to ensure they both understand our value and comprehend how we can assist in meeting the overall demands on the health care system over the next 20 years.

With all of the evidence now available in Canada to support the value of pharmacists, it is time for each of us to pick up the baton and run for the gold—the best possible outcome and experience for every patient who is receiving medication therapy.



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