

## Ménage à trois

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On December 6 of last year, 3 national societies of hospital pharmacists entered into an agreement to improve the health and quality of life of North Americans by fostering the advancement of hospital pharmacy practice. This historic agreement, called the North American Compact on the Advancement of Hospital Pharmacy, was signed at a ceremony during the 39th Midyear Clinical Meeting of the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) in Orlando, Florida. The organizations participating in the agreement are ASHP, CSHP, and the Mexican Association of Hospital Pharmacists (MAHP), in consultation with the National College of Pharmaceutical Biologist Chemists of Mexico. You can view the full text of the Compact on CSHP's Web site ([http://www.csHP.ca/dms/dmsView/1\\_North-American-Compact-final-December-2004.pdf](http://www.csHP.ca/dms/dmsView/1_North-American-Compact-final-December-2004.pdf)).

The concept of a North American collaborative agreement was ratified by CSHP Council at the 2003 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in St. John's, Newfoundland. The formal agreement was completed when representatives from each organization met this past August at the CSHP AGM in Edmonton, Alberta.

The differences in health care systems, hospital pharmacy services, and hospital pharmacists' scope of practice between the United States, Canada, and Mexico afford unique opportunities for each nation to learn from the others. The signing partners acknowledge that hospital physicians, nurses, administrators, and patients in North America have similar concerns related to medication use and that professional organizations need to diversify the promotion of hospital pharmacists' ability to address these issues and contribute to the amelioration of many significant public health problems in North America.

This tripartite agreement complements CSHP's value of collaboration. It also builds on the long-standing collaborative relationship with ASHP and establishes

what is envisaged as a similar relationship with the MAHP.

What's in it for Canadian hospital pharmacists? Over the medium to long term, the signatory organizations will further hospital pharmacy practice in North America by identifying and

prioritizing needs; by recognizing existing resources and developing new ones to address those needs; by designing education and training programs for pharmacy students, pharmacy residents, and pharmacists; and by fostering exchanges of hospital pharmacy experts among the 3 countries..

In the short term, CSHP members can register for all ASHP meetings at the ASHP member rate and can purchase ASHP publications, videotapes, and software at competitive prices through the CSHP National Office. Watch for more information in an upcoming issue of the *EOB*.

The North American Compact on the Advancement of Hospital Pharmacy represents an important turning point in cross-border collaboration within organized hospital pharmacy in North America. Fortunately, this professional relationship will never be tainted by trade disputes over softwood lumber, cows and the like . . .




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