

Talkin' 'bout My Association

Zack Dumont

Along with the other presidential officers and Chief Executive Officer, Jody Ciufo, we've gotten out in front of membership for 'town hall'-like sessions. We've received positive reinforcement, fielded concerns, answered questions and asked a few of our own. A question we've been asking is "What does the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) mean to you?" For me, the answer is easy. CSHP has and always will be my community. Though I celebrate diversity of thought, I was happy to see I wasn't alone. Many others felt the same, and we've got the word clouds to prove it.

I've admired this community since I was a student over 12 years ago. At Society meetings and events, I've had baseless daydreams about how CSHP came to be. I've imagined that way back when (more than 70 years ago!) leaders in the profession congregated, they said "Hey, there's probably strength in numbers. What if we got together regularly? What if we did some of the same things at our workplaces when we part? And then, what if we got together again and shared our findings?" Probably an over-simplification. Despite how it really happened, I enjoy the wholesomeness in these folks seeing an opportunity to form something—like a co-op—when no one gave that direction; no one was looking out for them. What compelled them to do that? These leaders had vision and, subsequently, the leadership skills to make it happen.

CSHP surges on today. I get the sense that members are feeling the energy. It remains your Society, your co-operative. And I mean 'your' entirely. I have the challenge to help shepherd it over the next few years, but it never stops being yours. After I'm done, someone else gets a turn. All the while, your meeting place goes on. Your community never stops, so long as we will it to carry on.

What ties us together? What common thread makes this feel like home? Our recent member survey provides

some insight. Members tell us they are most highly satisfied with our educational offerings, this Journal, and residency programs. For me, these represent some of our main mechanisms for communicating, celebrating, and fostering one of our shared values: to work with patients, where the sole focus is to improve their outcomes. Knowing that whatever medication therapy decisions we make or support others to make—to start, stop, or change therapy—they have everything to do with improving patients' outcomes.

I feel included in the Society because I have seen leaders—role models—on display, winning awards, achieving fellowship, and because I have walked amongst them at Society events. CSHP is the place to be. It shaped me, it brings me pride, and for that I am grateful. My plan is to devote these next few years to demonstrating my gratitude by growing and strengthening our community, one of diversity and inclusion, and to focus on improving patient outcomes.

This is only my plan. Perhaps formal leadership is not for you. However, I encourage you to engage in your professional association. A society like CSHP is indeed greater than the sum of its parts, and, as such, you will get more from it than you can possibly give. Your professional association: a community worth devotion.



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