

Time to slow down . . .

Shallen Letwin

After spending the past 15 years involved with many pharmacy-related organizations and committees, most recently as a presidential officer for the Canadian College of Clinical Pharmacy, I told my wife that it was time for me to slow down. She chuckled to herself and muttered, “You? Slow down? . . . Sure you will.”

But this time I really meant it. I was going to prove my wife wrong. I was going to spend more time doing less. And then it arrived, the opportunity of a lifetime: an invitation to serve as a presidential officer for the organization I valued the most, the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists. I had to go to my wife, hat in hand, and tell her that she was right — again — but this time it didn't bother me to make that admission. I very much wanted to serve the organization that represents hospital pharmacists across this great country.

Nonetheless, before accepting the position of President Elect, I started to reflect on my career. Suddenly, a flood of thoughts entered my head, and I started to panic. Was I worthy of such an honour? Had I done enough to promote and speak up for hospital pharmacists? Did I have enough experience? Could I do this? Was I a strong enough leader?

After taking a few deep breaths, I realized that if I was going to take on this responsibility, I needed to be absolutely sure that I could do the job. So I began to think of my mentors and wondered how they had been able to lead our profession. Then it hit me. All of them had similar attributes: commitment, knowledge, passion, openness, creativity, relentlessness, and sincerity. At that moment, I was even more unsure whether I had what

it takes. But then I remembered that some of my colleagues call me “the just do it guy” and that's exactly what I did. I took another risk and accepted the position.

There are many instances where careful planning is essential to making a decision or implementing a specific initiative; however, I have always tried to bring a little of the “just do it” attitude to my work and personal life. Taking healthy risks and chances is what makes our profession move forward. We all need to continue to take risks to make progress. Hospital pharmacy practice has come a long way, and we continue to “push the boundaries” so that we can provide better health for Canadians.

In closing, I applaud each and every one of you who has taken a chance to improve your practice in order to provide optimal pharmaceutical care. I am excited, committed, and delighted to serve as your next President, and for the next 3 years I don't think I'll be slowing down!



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