

Acknowledging the Contributions of Volunteers

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The support CSHP volunteers provide is critical to the success and vitality of the Society. Every year members devote countless hours to national, branch, and chapter activities. Their support comes in all shapes and sizes: serving on the executive, committees, or task forces; planning or speaking at educational sessions; writing a guideline or information paper; or contributing to an AGM host committee.

If you ask CSHP members why they volunteer, the consistent response is they are supporting a cause they believe in and they want to give something back to the profession and the Society that has done so much for them. They value the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people, network with colleagues, and lead their profession. They find it to be a rewarding and satisfying experience, and feel they are making a difference.

While members do not volunteer for financial reward, it is critical that their efforts be acknowledged. Appreciation for a job well done often brings them back for more. How does a Society so rich in volunteerism acknowledge its members? The National Office, branches, and chapters use a wide variety of methods, including verbal and written thanks, awards, gifts, and honorariums. While the intent of all methods is laudable, there have been inconsistencies and, in some cases, insufficient acknowledgement.

So how can the Society ensure the volunteer efforts of its members are acknowledged? CSHP Council committed to this principle in the development of the Society's new strategic plan at the 2003 AGM. One of the "Core Values" of the Society's new strategic plan is "the commitment of our members to our Society and the profession". CSHP

Council's commitment to living this core value was evident in their establishment of the Member Recognition Task Force. The task force will review the Society's current methods of recognizing members and provide recommendations to Council to ensure that efficient, fair,

consistent, and affordable processes are in place to recognize volunteer efforts. The enhancement of member recognition processes will allow the Society to fulfill the promise of a core value and will encourage, promote, and sustain member volunteerism well into the future.

Despite CSHP's rich history of member volunteerism, promoting and sustaining these efforts will be a challenge in the years ahead. We live in an age of competing demands. Pharmacist shortages often result in additional responsibilities and hours of work for members. They are challenged to find volunteer hours in the face of workplace demands, and those of personal interests and responsibilities. Acknowledgement of volunteer efforts with thanks for a job well done will help to meet this challenge.



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