

"Setting the Course" in "The Perfect Storm"

James L. Mann

In my previous report, I focused on updating CSHP Council and the membership with regard to changes at the national office. Given the number of changes, especially in personnel, the task of familiarizing myself with the position of Executive Director has been more an indoctrination than a honeymoon. Perhaps the most important preamble I should make to my current report is to emphasize the very real, yet priceless effort that is being made by staff to ensure that the Society's major activities are maintained. Staff members have been integral to the orientation, rejuvenation, and evolution of CSHP in our attempts to "set the course". I am proud to

say that, although we have been late on many of our recent projects, by early August we had completed a phenomenal workload in preparation for the successful annual general meeting (AGM) in Halifax. As I have already indicated to the Executive, we lost some 40 years of Society experience last summer because of changes in staff, and we spent much of first 4 months of my tenure as



continued on page 236

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

"Setting the Course" — continued from page 177

Executive Director building up the CSHP office team before we could attempt the tasks expected of us. I am pleased to introduce the CSHP team that has evolved over a very short period.

CSHP STAFF

In the past few months, responsibilities in the CSHP office have been reorganized to ensure that the Society's priorities are being fulfilled in the most appropriate way.

Helen Halligan started on May 7 as **Administrative Coordinator**, with responsibility for Awards, the Board of Fellows, the Canadian Hospital Pharmacy Residency Board, and administrative support to the Ontario Branch. Helen very quickly undertook other responsibilities that needed urgent attention (e.g., membership renewal, replacing Membership Coordinator Vance Pitre, who left at the end of April), since duties associated with the July 1 annual renewal just couldn't wait! It quickly became apparent that Helen was the perfect choice to fill the newly created position of **Manager, Office Operations** (as of June 27, 2001), and she continues to spearhead our team's response to many operational issues.

Angèle St-Jules, CSHP's **Executive Assistant** (providing support to Executive, Council, and the Executive Director) went on parental leave in mid-March after the birth of her son. After 3 months in the position, Cindy Denommée decided to return to other activities, and **Brigitte Heapy** joined us in early June as Angèle's full-time replacement. Brigitte is fully bilingual and has already made a substantial contribution to the office.

Gloria Day assumed the responsibility of **Meeting Coordinator** in September 2000 after 7 years as the Society's Secretary/Receptionist. She successfully orchestrated the 2001 Professional Practice Conference (PPC)—the largest ever—coordinating the efforts of Team CSHP, both volunteers and staff. Gloria also completed much of the planning for the AGM but unfortunately fell ill late in June. **Desarae Davidson**, formerly a staff member of the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and a significant contributor to the CSHP team during the PPC, assumed many of the administrative tasks related to the AGM and has agreed to carry on as our **Office Administrator** after the AGM.

Barry Henson is our longest-serving staff member, with 10 years as part-time **Finance Coordinator**, a position that continues to evolve. To make optimal use

of Barry's skill set, we have relieved him of the bookkeeping demands of our financial accounting system. These duties have been combined with the data entry requirements of the Membership Coordinator position in the position of **Membership Administrator**, which was recently filled by **Laurie Carquez**. We are fortunate that Laurie also has skills in Web site development and maintenance, which will be put to good use. We all look forward to Laurie's contribution.

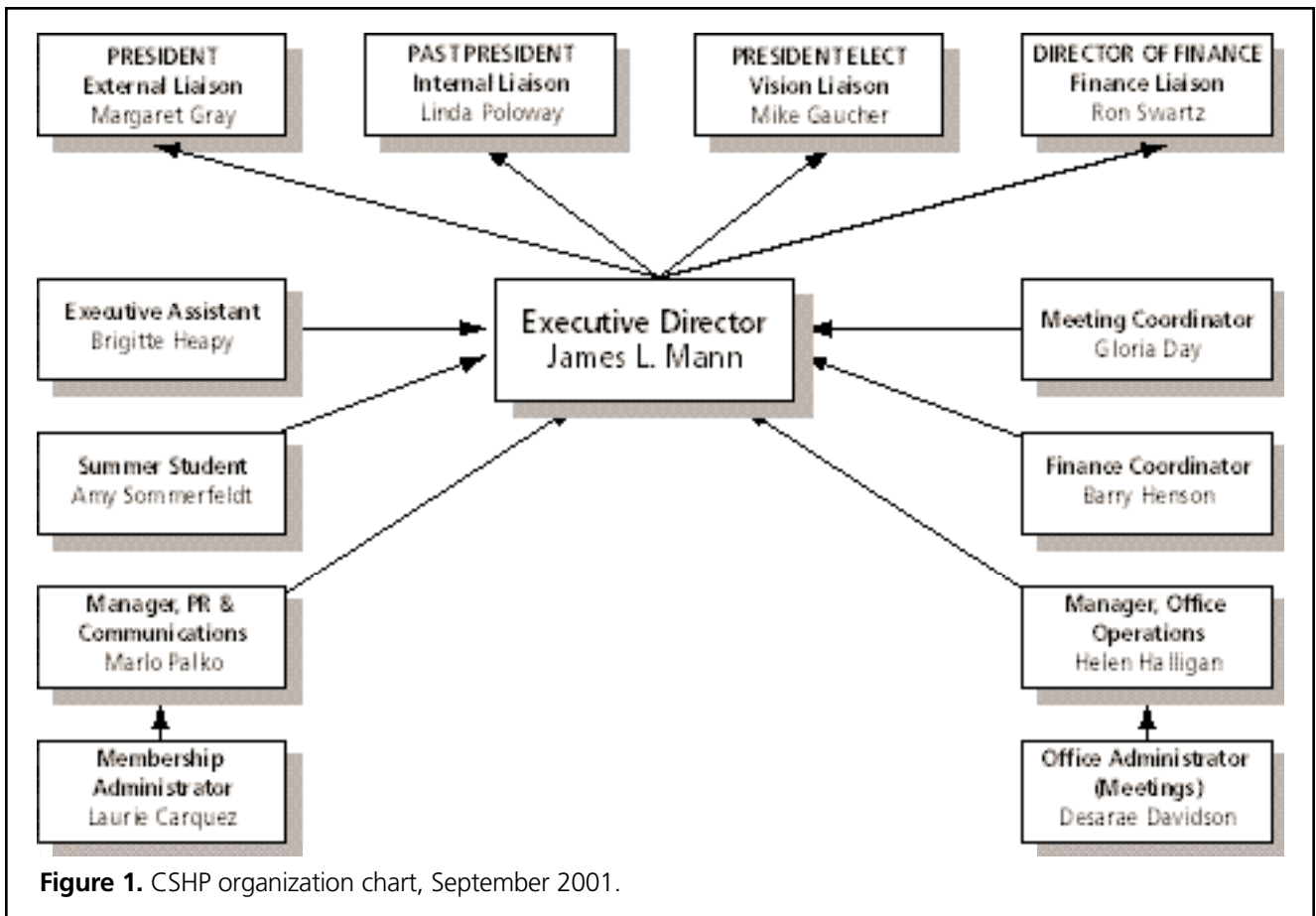
Marlo Palko, our most recent recruit, has taken on the newly created portfolio of **Manager, PR and Communications**. Marlo has completed a political science degree (Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario), as well as diploma programs in public relations and graphic arts, and came to us from a strategic marketing firm in Toronto. We are looking forward to Marlo's contributions to the Society's communications "vehicles", including a new bimonthly newsletter to be published in alternate months with *CJHP*. The plethora of topics needing our attention demands a strong network so that members and external stakeholders can capitalize on the expertise and experiences of our colleagues.

The current CSHP organizational chart (Fig. 1) reflects the many recent changes in the office of your Society.

REORGANIZATION

Council, through then-President Linda Poloway, has charged me with reorganizing the way CSHP functions internally; in particular, I will be looking at ways to deconstruct the "silo" approach (exemplified by one-member departments) that has developed over the years and which has become a source of frustration for Council and members alike. I have already identified the need for an Office Operations Manager, someone to take charge of internal operational issues on a day-to-day basis and to liaise with members in the absence of the Executive Director. As mentioned earlier, Helen Halligan has taken on this role. We have also identified the need for a manager for all of our publications and external communication vehicles, including those in the electronic medium. We have responded to the need to have bookkeeping and data entry completed by someone other than our Finance Coordinator with the creation of the Membership Administrator position, reporting to Marlo Palko. We continue to address the





details associated with planning the PPC and AGM through the Meeting Coordinator position but are now stressing the importance of teamwork to ensure the continued success of these huge initiatives.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

In conjunction with the Director of Finance, Ron Swartz, and the Finance Coordinator, Barry Henson, we have initiated a number of changes to our internal operations as well as to the reports that are generated for the Finance Committee and Council. As of July 1, we have been creating supplier files/accounts for all of our support agencies. Further, we are solidifying our major internal constituents such as the Canadian Hospital Pharmacy Residency Board, *CJHP*, the Board of Fellows, the Awards Program, the Research and Education Foundation, payroll, insurance benefits, and other items. In addition, we have initiated corporate files for pharmaceutical companies that include a standard support/contribution profile for the Society record, which will help us to improve our relationships with

these important agencies.

For our financial statements to Council and the membership, we have created a **summary operations page**, which depicts the Society's financial position at a glance, presenting information in terms of major cost centres that should be easily understood by everyone. In addition, we have created an **index to the reporting of the statements** for both Council and the Finance Committee, and we have avoided clutter by eliminating many of the "lesser accounts" (those that have not been used or that represent very small dollar values).

MEMBERSHIP

In the absence of a Membership Coordinator, the rest of the CSHP staff have undertaken a significant effort to respond to **membership renewals**, **membership brochure** requirements, and the **membership posters** that were recommended at the 2000 AGM. Although delayed, most of these tasks have now been accomplished, and we are pleased to report a high renewal rate despite the problems. The faith of our members and their

commitment to the Society remain as strong as ever and are appreciated during this time of change.

COMPUTER SUPPORT

One of the long-recognized concerns related to the operating efficiency of the office has been the computer system (both hardware and software) and its ability to support the tasks demanded in support of members. The most readily identified limitation is the fact that CSHP works in a MacIntosh-based word-processing environment for which very few staff are trained and for which obtaining external support is difficult; this problem is compounded by the IMIS software membership database, which had to be adapted for the Mac framework.

We have pursued a tendering process to convert the office to IBM (8 workstations) and were anticipating full implementation by the end of August 2001. Through discussions with the Executive and the Finance Committee, we have identified funds for the conversion within the 2001/2002 budget. One of the most important considerations has been the Society's IMIS database. Fortunately, this system can be easily configured for an IBM framework, and we expect to begin making full use of the database early in the fall.

THE CANADIAN JOURNAL OF HOSPITAL PHARMACY

The *CJHP*, which will be published 4 times in 2001, continues to represent an exceptional member benefit. Despite decreases in advertising revenue over the past few years, we have been able to break even on the first 2 issues of the current volume, as well as the 2001 AGM program. This year for the first time, the AGM program was published as a journal supplement; the PPC program will also be published as a supplement in future. This change makes these programs more attractive from an advertising perspective. Advertising agency support has been renegotiated, and Keith Health Care (under the direction of Cliff Goodman) has undertaken to refocus the journal's position with the pharmaceutical industry. We have also summarized the ways in which pharmacists contribute to drug-use management and have outlined how it is in the industry's best interest to support pharmacists in this role. Scott Walker, the Editor of *CJHP*, has laid a foundation to ensure the viability of the Journal through the production of a continuing education (CE) insert with each issue. The CE inserts have been popular and have also provided a publication opportunity for the

members of our Practice Specialty Networks. Through our efforts and those of the advertising agency, our hope is to return the journal's frequency to 5 issues per year beginning in 2002.

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

We continue to participate in a variety of external activities, both in partnership and via representatives, to address the many profession-wide issues that we face at the national level. **Seamless care**, a joint initiative with CPhA for the past 3 years, is an effort that has resulted in 2 workshops with proceedings and action steps designed to provide direction for our colleagues in both community and hospital practice. One of the overriding objectives of these workshops has been to ensure that the successful models described and presented during the workshops are made available to our "grassroots practitioners". Therefore, the proceedings for the most recent workshop will be posted on the Web sites of both CPhA and CSHP by September. Past President Robin Ensom has been CSHP's designated co-chair for the seamless care workshops, and Nancy Roberts has been a key member of the planning committee.

The ever-present, multifaceted problem of **pharmacist shortage (demand)** has been the focus of a nationwide effort under the leadership of CPhA, with the assistance of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). After an all-association meeting in February 2000, a situational analysis within pharmacy was completed this spring. A steering committee is now being formed to guide the profession-wide initiative, through an HRDC sectoral study expected to be completed by late 2002 or early 2003. The importance of the issue and its impact on practice is self-evident among all of our colleagues and remains a major consideration in much of what the Society is attempting to do.

Medication errors continue to dominate the profession's agenda, and a substantial effort by Health Canada to develop a nationwide reporting program is of strong interest to both Council and the membership at large. CSHP has had its own committee addressing this issue and has been present for other initiatives, such as the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) Canada and Health Canada's nationwide reporting program.

We are in the process of ensuring that the Society can meet the objectives set forth in its **Vision 2003** statement. This statement clearly challenges us all, by identifying the hospital pharmacist's role in enhancing patient care, to move forward in fulfilling that role. Staff have been challenged by the tasks at hand and continue to enjoy supporting the profession in any way



that we can. We look forward to working with Council, the members of our many committees and task forces, our representatives to external organizations, and the membership at large as we explore issues beyond the internal operations of the Society in the months and years ahead.

On behalf of all of the staff, I am grateful for the patience and understanding of the now Past President, Linda Poloway, and the Executive during what can only be described as a turbulent year.

If you would like more information about these or other issues, please contact the national office or your branch delegate.

James L. Mann, MScPhm, FCSHP, Executive Director

e-mail: jmann@cshp.ca

CSHP home page: <http://www.cshp.ca>