

A 3-Year Commitment–Adventure

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The first time a person is approached to run for a leadership position in a charitable or professional organization, he or she is compelled to think, “How much of a commitment will this be?” When one becomes involved on the presidential track at the national level of our organization, CSHP, the commitment is 3 years of service on the Executive Committee — as President-Elect, President, and Past President.

The term “commitment” is defined in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* as follows:

- an engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action
- a pledge or undertaking.

I'm sure that many of my predecessors (Kelly Babcock, Donna Pipa, Bob Nakagawa, Robin Ensom, Nancy Roberts, and Larry Legare, among others) would concur that the first definition does occasionally hit us smack between the eyes during that 3-year CSHP executive term. However, I know that they all accepted the commitment and responsibility because of the second definition — the “pledge”. People who follow the path of becoming CSHP President do so as a pledge to the membership, to the profession, and to the Society. Each individual who takes on this role wants to better our professional practice. Becoming involved at this level of leadership provides the opportunity to “make a difference”, and taking this pledge introduces one to a 3-year adventure complete with expected and unexpected challenges. In view of the recent changes in our executive “line-up”, it may be helpful for CSHP members to learn about the responsibilities that your executive officers carry for their 3-year terms. Each new presidential officer is assigned a portfolio that is carried throughout the 3 years of service on the Executive Committee. These 3 portfolios are designed to even out the workload that was once assigned primarily to the President. The portfolios also reflect CSHP's Vision and keep responsibilities directed toward achieving the Vision.

The *Vision Liaison Officer* is responsible for all initiatives directed at achieving CSHP's Vision. Committees, task forces, and initiatives that fall under the guidance of this portfolio include Educational Services, Pharmaceutical Care Advisory, Resolutions, Strategic Planning, Pharmacist Prescribing, Seamless Care, Home Health Care, and, most recently, coordination of the decision process for a potential change in the Society's name.

The *External Liaison Officer* is responsible for all CSHP activities that occur in collaboration with govern-

ment, faculties of pharmacy, professional organizations, and patient groups with which CSHP may collaborate. The presidential officer responsible for this portfolio must always ensure that CSHP's external activities are in tune with CSHP's Vision. Committees, task forces, and CSHP representatives and liaisons falling under the guidance of this portfolio include Drug Labelling and Packaging, Government and Health Policy Planning, Public Relations, Pharmacy Specialty Networks, Pharmacy Technicians, Medication Error Reporting System, Entry-Level PharmD Program, CAPSI-CSHP Poster Competition, and representatives and liaisons to more than 20 organizations, committees, and boards outside of CSHP (e.g., Canadian Pharmacists Association, American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada, National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities, Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students and Interns, Canadian Association of Pharmacy Technicians, and Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada).

The *Internal Liaison Officer* is responsible for all internal CSHP activities that directly or indirectly bring the Society closer to achieving the goals set out in its Vision. Committees, task forces, and representation that fall under the guidance of this portfolio include Awards, Bylaws, Branch Web Site Development, Membership, Standards and Publications, Research, Bulk Compounding Guidelines Review, Standards of Practice Review, Latex Allergies, Review of CSHP National Committee/Task Force Structure and Method of Business, Board of Fellows, and the Canadian Hospital Pharmacy Residency Board.

The “pledge” made by all volunteers who take on this level of CSHP leadership is fulfilled within the particular officer's portfolio but also involves sharing in the decision-making of the other officers on the Executive Committee. Although the presidential officers' responsibilities differ in nature, the Executive Committee (which includes the Executive Director, the Director of Finance, and the 3 presidential officers) always works as a team. This creates, as Kelly Babcock frames it, “a ton of email”; however, the end result is coordinated actions and initiatives that benefit the membership, the profession, and the Society.

Restriction of freedom? Yes, sometimes. A pledge? Always. An adventure? You'd better believe it!

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