

Pharmacists Unite!

Janice Munroe

Given that I hail from British Columbia, you might be inclined to think, from the title of this report, that my remarks will focus on unionization. In reality, this is a “call to rally together”, but with a twist.

These days, pharmacists are experiencing ever-increasing demands to accomplish more in the same amount of time. We are being asked to participate in research and to work at the forefront of cutting-edge, specialized pharmacotherapy. Ironically, we are to accomplish this increased workload while maintaining an appropriate “work–life balance”! Everyone intuitively knows that this is an impossible equation.

Pharmacists share the quest to provide safe and effective patient care. Individually, we strive to make the most of the tools and technology at our disposal. We each make some progress, and, as a result, we have managed to squeeze in some of these ever-increasing requests.

However, to make significant advances, we must come together to truly change our practice environment so that it supports our collective quest. This task cannot be accomplished by individuals working alone. Organizations such as the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) and the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) are well positioned to be our voice at the tables where changes in practice settings will need to receive approval and support. The work of these 2 organizations on both CSHP 2015 and the Blueprint for Pharmacy has laid the foundation upon which pharmacy practice will build and grow.

The patients for whom hospital pharmacists provide care also lead lives outside of the hospital, where they receive care from community pharmacists. As such, hospital and community pharmacists share the same ultimate goals, and these two branches of the pharmacy profession must unite to achieve them. We must work together rather than independently.

Members’ support of the CSHP and the CPhA allows these organizations to advocate on behalf of each and every one of us.

The CSHP National Office cultivates and nourishes strong relationships with external stakeholders by maintaining regular communication and by sharing information about key issues. Our collective voice, heard through these advocacy efforts at the organizational level, is far stronger and more effective than each of our voices singularly!



The CSHP Advocacy Committee identifies and develops promotional campaigns focusing on the roles of pharmacists in, and their contributions to, quality patient care. These campaigns are developed and conducted by the committee at the national level and are then implemented locally at the provincial (branch) level. Through the strong relationships that each CSHP branch cultivates and nourishes with key external stakeholders in its own province or region, our support of the advancement of pharmacy practice is heard.

What front-line hospital pharmacists need now is concrete, tangible support in the form of tools and technology that will help them in providing safe and effective care for their patients. We need to be heard, as we can no longer fight this battle independently. To achieve true advancement, we must come together as pharmacists united—united under the CSHP umbrella!

Janice Munroe, BScPharm, is CSHP President Elect and Internal Liaison of the CSHP.