Pharmacy services: Adding value to the health care team

Mahatma Gandhi once said that the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others. So many pharmacists define themselves through unselfish patient care services. I think that service is the key to gaining recognition of our value with payers and other members of the care team.

Pharmacists across the country provide untold and unmeasured but highly valuable services to patients. A recent review of quality research published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* highlighted demonstrated value of pharmacists’ services in reducing 30-day hospital readmissions and providing medication reconciliation during transitions of care. The authors concluded that pharmacists played a major role in successful interventions. According to the 2013 edition of the *MTM Digest*, 70% of providers reported having had more patients receive medication therapy management (MTM) services in 2012 than in 2010.

Pharmacists are carving out a valuable niche in care transitions. For example, the Mission Health System in Asheville, NC, launched a Medication Assistance Program where pharmacists collaborate with other health care team members and community partners to provide chronic disease management, medication review, and education services to low-income patients. At Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee, WI, pharmacists perform medication reconciliation upon admission, during transfer within the hospital, at discharge, and after discharge. You can read more about these and other organizations that promote pharmacists’ services in *Medication Management in Care Transitions Best Practices*, a new resource developed by APhA and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, released at APhA2013, and available at pharmacist.com.

We’re reaching out to organizations inside and outside pharmacy to find the best approach to getting pharmacists on the team. Dialogue is essential with consumer groups like AARP, the National Consumer League, and others to share how consumers can benefit from team-based care that includes pharmacists.

If we are to succeed in the pursuit of provider status, it is also important for pharmacists to speak in a unified voice. There is a concept in the military known as the “Commander’s Intent” where the singular intended outcome for a mission or a campaign is expressed at the top of every order. At APhA2013, I proposed the following intent as we work with our colleague organizations to solidify our coalition: If we are successful, consumers will be well served by pharmacists’ patient care services, and our services will be valued and well covered as members of the health care team. Our profession is uniting to collaborate with other health care professions to enhance consumer access to pharmacists’ patient care services.

Your voice is needed now. To express your support and willingness to contribute to APhA’s initiative to promote provider status, visit www.pharmacist.com/providerstatusrecognition and fill out an online form by clicking on the green button.

Thomas E. Menighan, BSPharm, MBA, ScD (Hon), Executive Vice President and CEO

**Media vibe**

During the month of February, APhA external communications and media advisors responded to 10 media inquiries, including the following:

- *Wall Street Journal*: Pharmacists and the Affordable Care Act
- CNNMoney.com: Is pharmacy the best career for women?
- MarketWatch.com: Managing the financial toll of drug adverse effects
- Everydayhealth.com: Simplifying diabetes medication schedules
- *Managed Healthcare Executive*: Role of pharmacists in accountable care organizations

$1.5 million

Amount committed by the APhA Board of Trustees to support a long-range effort to ensure that patients have access to pharmacists’ clinical services and that pharmacists gain health care provider status

**Source: APhA news release**
(http://apha.us/10e6Peb)
Members only

Alan McKay, PhD, Founding Dean of Shenandoah University’s Bernard J. Dunn School of Pharmacy, and Bruce Roberts, CEO of RxAlly, a first-of-its-kind alliance of more than 22,000 pharmacies nationwide, are collaborating on a Pfizer-awarded grant to the university. The program will work toward an overall goal of promoting and increasing pneumococcal vaccinations among adults older than 65 years and high-risk patients aged 2 years to 64 years with comorbid conditions. Kerr Drug, a North Carolina–based regional community pharmacy chain and RxAlly member, will participate in the initiative along with pharmacy educators, APhA immunization trainers, an accredited medical education company, and an outcomes analytics company, RealCME. Bruce Clayton, PharmD, Professor of Pharmacy Practice and Associate Dean in the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Butler University in Indianapolis, prepares his students to participate in important public health endeavors such as providing immunizations, which expands patient access to critical vaccines. As the coinstructor of the immunization education program at Butler, Clayton recently wrote an article for the Indianapolis Star local news website (www.indystar.com) about increasing vaccination rates to prevent illnesses and the valuable role that pharmacists can play in this public health effort. Michael Crowe, PharmD, Clinical Technology Manager at Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy in Flint, MI, received the Fellow of Michigan Pharmacists Association award for his dedication to pharmacy and the community. Crowe was recognized for leading the clinical development of Diplomat’s proprietary eNAV software as well as other clinical programs. He also researches, reviews, and analyzes the effectiveness and efficiency of existing clinical requirements and develops strategies for enhancing and leveraging these processes. Crowe, who is Chairman of the Genesee County Pharmacists Association, was also honored with the Michigan Pharmacy Political Action Committee’s Hank Fuhs Good Government Award. The committee works to improve public policy concerning the pharmaceutical industry. Members can share news about promotions, new positions, and awards with the rest of APhA by e-mailing the details—who, what, when, and where—to PT@aphanet.org. Photographs, in the form of high-resolution TIFF or JPEG files, are welcome.

A minute with …

Jose Cervantes, PharmD
Clinical Manager, Pharmacy Professional Services
H-E-B Grocery Company
San Antonio, Texas
Member since 2005

My current job is … Clinical Manager of Pharmacy Professional Services. I am responsible for our patient care programs, including immunization, health screening, medication therapy management, and disease state management programs.

I first became interested in being a pharmacist … in high school. I completed an internship at an architecture firm and quickly learned that architecture was not for me. Luckily, my good friend loved her pharmacy internship and talked me into exploring the profession. Once I learned about patient care and the range of opportunities within the profession, I was hooked.

My most memorable APhA experience … occurred during my first year of pharmacy school. I attended the Annual Meeting in San Francisco, and this was actually my first time on a plane! I was able to build strong relationships with my classmates and form new bonds with professionals from across the country.

The advice I give to pharmacists who want to follow my career path … is to continue to challenge yourself. Keep your eyes open to new opportunities and take risks. If you choose to stop learning new things, you will not move forward.
On the go

A PhA leaders and staff travel throughout the country to promote the profession and be the voice for pharmacy. The following is a sample of recent activity.

Thomas E. Menighan, BSPharm, MBA, ScD (Hon), FAPhA, APhA Executive Vice President and CEO, participated in the inaugural Jewell and Carl Emswiller Interprofessional Symposium. Hosted by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the event brought together members of the medicine, pharmacy, nursing, dentistry, and other health professions to discuss increasing collaboration and education to improve patient care. Menighan participated in a panel, “How Do We Prepare for the Interprofessional Practice Environment of Tomorrow,” along with Joanne Disch, PhD, RN, FANN, Clinical Professor, University of Minnesota School of Nursing, and Sheldon Retchin, MD, MSPH, Vice President for Health Sciences and CEO of the VCU Health System. Richmond, VA

Douglas Lobdell, BSPharm, MS, APhA Senior Director, Corporate Alliances, and Menighan participated in the Federation of Pharmacy Networks (FPN) annual meeting, where they visited with the 20 FPN member pharmacy buying groups. Lobdell and Menighan briefed the groups on the pharmacist provider status initiative and discussed community pharmacy accreditation. Clearwater, FL

Mitch Rothholz, BSPharm, MBA, APhA Chief Strategy Officer, participated in the National Association of County and City Health Officials’ and Association of State and Territorial Health Officers’ Public Health Preparedness Summit. The pharmacy discussion centered on a project, for which APhA was a technical consultant, related to community pharmacists dispensing antiviral medications and their experiences in immunizations. Atlanta

Menighan attended the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA) annual meeting, where sessions highlighted market segmentation for nonprescription drug products. Menighan networked with new contacts and visited CHPA staff regarding APhA’s interest in FDA’s proposed new OTC paradigm for conditions of safe use. Naples, FL

The Medication Therapy Management (MTM) e-Community provides a forum for APhA members to discuss issues and share information about MTM services. Below are excerpts from a recent MTM e-Community discussion about humor.

Click on the pharmacist.com homepage link to access APhA members-only e-Communities.

If used early in the service, [humor] breaks the ice in communication, makes the patient and/or caregiver feel a little more comfortable with you, and conveys to you how the patient is feeling or how they communicate. Oh, and smile, using eye contact when implementing the humor.

I find the same to be true with [advanced pharmacy practice experience] students. I try hard to use humor and tell a story or two that will put students at ease early in the experience to open up the lines of communication with them and let them know that I’m on their side.

Potential donors who signed up for the Be the Match national marrow donor program during APhA2013

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PhA is offering high-level national conference education to pharmacists who were unable to travel to APhA2013. For the first time, 11 sessions were videotaped and are now available for purchase on pharmacist.com, totaling 22 hours of continuing pharmacy education home-study credit.

“This is APhA’s solution to reach a broader audience with the incredibly valuable content that is developed every year for the Annual Meeting,” said Shelby Englert, APhA’s Senior Director of Education. “The sessions are representative of the different educational tracks that are offered at the Annual Meeting, and we hope we will reach a diverse audience with diverse educational needs.”

The following 11 sessions are available as of April 5:

- A Breath of Fresh Air: Respiratory Update
- Effective Preceptor Strategies for Residents and Students
- Geriatric Update: Strategies to Improve Seniors’ Quality of Life
- HIV Update
- Making a Case for Insulin Therapy
- Motivational Interviewing: Assessing and Assisting Patients with Diabetes
- New Approaches to Hepatitis C
- Pharmacists Helping Patients Manage Pain
- Preventing Medication Errors in a Changing Health-Care System
- Survey Strategies for the Digital Age
- Understanding and Advocating for the Pharmacist’s Role in Reducing Hospital Readmissions

The sessions are available to APhA members for $149 and $199 for nonmembers. The sessions will be available for 2 years.

Visit pharmacist.com for more information.

“\[This is a true team effort, reflecting the efforts of over 200 physicians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, and technologists.\]”

Jeffrey L. Saver, MD, Director of the Stroke and Vascular Neurology Program at the UCLA Stroke Center, regarding the center’s certification as a comprehensive stroke center by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association. It is one of the first 10 centers nationwide to receive that designation

Source: UCLA news release (http://apha.us/10ivxeT)

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Matthew Lacroix, PharmD, BCPS
Assistant Professor, Clinical Specialist
University of New England College of Pharmacy
Portland, ME
Member since 2007

I joined APhA because ... I first joined APhA as a student as part of the APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists because that is where students’ voices can be heard to help the profession grow. I have stayed a member of APhA because it is recognized as a leader in promoting the profession.

My most memorable APhA experience ... was serving for 2 years as a New Practitioner Representative in an APhA Academy of Pharmacy Practice & Management section. I was able to help advance the work of the Association and meet many of the people that help move the profession forward.

The advice I give to pharmacists who want to follow my career path ... is to learn to be flexible. Accept that the profession is a wide open one and that where you think you want to go may not be the place you land. Your talents and strengths will open doors you didn’t even know existed when you first picked pharmacy as a profession.

If I weren’t a pharmacist, I’d be ... an accountant. Looking at what I love about my job, I think I also would have considered being a teacher.
340B and PSPC at APhA2013

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Office of Pharmacy Affairs (OPA) supported several activities at the 2013 APhA Annual Meeting & Expo-sition. The activities focused around the 340B Drug Pricing Program and the Patient Safety and Clinical Pharmacy Services Collaborative (PSPC).

Spring workshop

As APhA2013 kicked off, APhA, OPA, and the Apexus Prime Vendor Program (PVP) welcomed nine leading practice sites into the 340B Peer-to-Peer program. These new sites sent representatives (peer mentors) to the spring workshop for onsite training and to connect with other peer mentors from the 22 sites that already participate in the program. These leading practice sites will help other 340B-covered entities, including community health centers and disproportionate share hospitals, maximize the value of 340B under a broad-based, collaborative technical assistance model while maintaining 340B program compliance.

Each of the new Peer-to-Peer sites excels in four cornerstone areas of clinically and cost-effective pharmacy services: provision of access to affordable medications, efficient business practices, outcomes-driven clinical programs, and quality assurance programs. You can learn more about the 340B Peer-to-Peer program at www.healthcarecommunities.org.

Along with representatives from each of the 340B Peer-to-Peer leading practice sites, APhA also invited each of the HRSA-contracted 340B regional advisors to attend the spring workshop. The regional advisors are a group of 340B expert consultants who plan, coordinate, and act as facilitators at the monthly peer webinars in addition to other duties.

Because the 340B regional advisors and peer mentors are located across the nation, training at APhA Annual Meetings is one of the few times throughout the year when regional advisors, peer mentors, APhA staff, and representatives from OPA and Apexus PVP work in a large group setting to discuss 340B integrity.

340B University

APhA collaborated with Apexus PVP in hosting a 340B University session at APhA2013. Several HRSA-contracted 340B regional advisors and peer mentors presented during the event. 340B University is an in-depth educational program designed to meet the practical needs of the 340B PVP participants and other program stakeholders. Topics covered in the training include statutory ceiling price calculations, fundamentals in implementing a compliant pharmacy program, and hands-on training with tools and resources available to assist with program integrity. You can learn more about 340B University and register for upcoming offerings by visiting www.340bpvp.com.

Access to Care

For the first year, APhA worked closely with HRSA OPA to develop a continuing pharmacy education track, the Access to Care track, aimed at pharmacists interested in helping underserved and underinsured patients and finding resources available to 340B stakeholders. All four sessions were very successful.

This year, sessions included Audits: Understanding the Process and Preparing Your Pharmacy; Going for “Gold”: Achieving Positive Patient Health and Safety Outcomes; Contract Pharmacy Implementation and Integrity; and Mitigating the Impact of Health Disparities on Pharmaceutical Care. During the session about audits, a HRSA OPA representative spoke about 340B program audits and recent 340B policy releases and answered questions from the audience. The session about safety outcomes included a poster session, which demonstrated real examples of improved patient care through implementing an integrated medication management system.

Stephanie Rilei
APhA Communications Manager for Federal Contracts & Grants
In February 2013, CDC announced that the 2012–13 influenza vaccine was only 9% effective against the H3N2 strain in seniors aged 65 and older. Overall, the vaccine was found to be 56% effective for preventing infection.


Preliminary rates of laboratory-confirmed influenza hospitalizations for the 2012–13 flu season as of February 23, 2013

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Did you know?

The APhA Academy of Pharmaceutical Research & Science (APhA–APRS) serves pharmacists and those members who are involved in the pharmaceutical sciences. The Academy offers members an opportunity to discuss and debate scientific research with peers, establish collaborative relationships with practitioners, and promote the benefits of pursuing an advanced degree in the pharmaceutical sciences to student pharmacists.

Participation in APhA’s academies, including APhA–APRS and the APhA Academy of Pharmacy Practice & Management (APhA–APPM), is fun and rewarding. For more information, visit pharmacist.com/get-involved. To join an Academy, log in to pharmacist.com, and click on Your Account and Update my Preferences. There you can select the Academies, sections, and Special Interest Groups that catch your eye.

PhA DrugInfoLine is an online pharmacotherapy news resource for APhA members. Each week APhA DrugInfoLine editors work with a panel of pharmacy experts in 20 therapeutic areas to highlight the most recent and relevant studies and guidelines published in peer-reviewed journals that affect drug therapy choices. Updates are made almost daily to the APhA DrugInfoLine Medication Monitor section to help you keep up to date on new drug approvals, supplemental approvals, alerts and recalls, and product withdrawals.

Starting next month, the top trending article on APhA DrugInfoLine will be featured in Pharmacy Today. Visit www.aphadruginfoline.com to catch up on the latest clinical trials, medication news, drug approvals, and practice guidelines. Let APhA DrugInfoLine help you make the best evidence-based recommendations and drug therapy choices for your patients.