



120th NABP Annual Meeting
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Report of the Executive Director/ Secretary

Presented by:

Lemrey "Al" Carter, PharmD, MS, RPh



Good morning, everyone. I hope you're feeling energized and inspired, both by your morning coffee, and the robust discussion we had during

the emerging topics session – not to mention the report we just heard from Brad, that with all the ups and downs of our economy, National Association of Boards of Pharmacy is in a sound financial position.

Before I get into my report, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the many organizations that have representatives in attendance at the meeting this year.

Collaborating, sharing information, and working together with these organizations is an important part of NABP's overall mission, and I am thankful to have these organizations here with us today.

As I thought about my report to you, our membership, I went back to September 2005, the last time I spent a considerable amount of time in Fort Worth, Texas. This was shortly after Hurricane Katrina, which had a large impact on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and New Orleans. Here I was, a newly graduated and licensed pharmacist that had temporarily relocated to Fort Worth due to the storm, along with many of my family members who were living with my parents. At that time, the Texas State Board of

Pharmacy issued temporary licenses to those pharmacists in Mississippi and Louisiana displaced by the storm. That six-month temporary license allowed me to practice in Texas while those impacted by the hurricane worked to rebuild. Reflecting on this steered me to a quote from Pearl S. Buck, the first woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, "If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday."

As we look back through the history of pharmacy, we quickly understand that the only constant is change and adaptation – whether it is changing practice models, technology, workplace environments, or regulations. This is why our Annual Meeting theme this year, "Driving Pharmacy Practice Evolution Together" is so fitting. "Together" is the operative word in this theme as it has taken all of us to move our regulatory approaches forward to ensure the protection of public health. And we are moving forward into tomorrow based on what we have learned from yesterday.

Since 1904, NABP has continued to evolve to support the boards in our shared mission, and in my report today I will share what the Association is currently doing to help. NABP already offers a wide range of programs and services – tools if you will – to assist the boards, and the Association has been hard at work ensuring the NABP toolbox contains the new tools we need, tools that will take us all into the future.

Tools such as the *Model State Pharmacy Act and Model Rules of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy*, competency assessment exams, and licensure transfer services remain staples of our toolbox. Today, I will share the latest on:

- Pulse by NABP™,
- developments in our licensure programs, and
- developments in our competency assessment offerings.

First, let's discuss a key addition to our toolbox: Pulse. This secure digital platform exemplifies our commitment to simplifying compliance processes for our members. Designed to streamline adherence to the Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) for manufacturers, distributors, and dispensers, Pulse is a critical tool in our collection. It supports a fully interoperable exchange system essential for tracking products through the drug supply chain.

With the final enforcement date set for November 27, 2024, our focus has been on ensuring all stakeholders have access to the tools they need to comply with DSCSA. DSCSA only works if there is widespread participation by the entire prescription drug supply chain – including the small dispenser community, which is most often targeted by counterfeiters and criminals. NABP is committed to equipping the boards of pharmacy and the dispenser community with

the tools they need to detect falsified and substandard medications before they reach the patient. Our dedication to this goal has been unwavering and is further emphasized by the fact that we are providing these tools at no cost to the supply chain and to the regulatory community.

Pulse stands out in our toolkit not just as a solution for compliance, but as a platform designed to significantly reduce the manual administrative burden for boards of pharmacy and other regulators. It also aims to enhance communication within the supply chain, a promise we are committed to fulfilling. However, the potential of Pulse extends far beyond these immediate benefits.

As you all are aware, counterfeit medications continue to pose an increasing threat to the United States prescription drug supply chain. They also pose a global threat. For example, the World Health Organization estimates that one in 10 medications in Africa are substandard or falsified. While Pulse was originally built to help detect counterfeit medications here in the US, we believe that these tools can be used to help protect patients at the global level. As such, later this year, NABP will begin piloting Pulse and its product-tracing capabilities in Africa – starting with Kenya – with the hope of equipping pharmacists and other health care providers there with tools to protect their patients. Our goal here is dual: to ensure medication safety and to bolster patient confidence in their medication sources.

In the US, we're leveraging Pulse in other pilots designed to facilitate secure communication channels specifically aimed at mitigating drug shortages. These pilots showcase our proactive approach in addressing critical health care challenges and demonstrate Pulse's versatility in addressing complex problems. Increasing visibility and transparency throughout the supply chain positions Pulse to help us address other critical needs in the future, addition to drug shortages.

Another critical area of our focus is modernizing licensee data

management tools. NABP has diligently worked to support boards of pharmacy by enhancing data exchange and integration, ensuring accurate and accessible information for stakeholders.

Efficient data exchange remains a cornerstone in our efforts to maintain accurate and up-to-date licensee data within NABP e-Profile Connect®. Over the last few years, NABP has made significant strides in this area, as evidenced by the three avenues for data sharing now available:

- secure file exchange for seamless information sharing;
- webhooks to trigger one-way data pushes based on events; and
- application programming interfaces enabling two-way communication between software applications.

Each of these data exchange options caters to different technological and administrative needs, contributing to the streamlined management of licensee information and benefiting all stakeholders involved.

Automated data sharing plays a crucial role in alleviating manual reporting and monitoring burdens associated with various data types for boards of pharmacy. For instance, NABP offers a variety of tools specifically designed to assist member boards in auditing continuing pharmacy education (CPE) compliance using CPE Monitor® data.

The versatility of data exchange and integration empowers pharmacy boards to focus on core responsibilities, accommodating varying levels of technical expertise and resources. Our objective is to provide systems that enhance operational efficiency and ease burdens, ultimately benefiting the entire pharmacy ecosystem.

In addition to our data-related services, NABP remains attuned to the evolving needs of member boards, schools, and colleges of pharmacy, particularly in the realm of tools related to examination services.

NABP's examination services are a vital component of our toolbox

and, in recent years, we have dedicated substantial resources to enhance these services to meet their critical function.

The cornerstone of NABP's examinations remains the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination® (NAPLEX®), a pivotal assessment in the pharmacy profession. For decades, the NAPLEX has set the standard for measuring pharmacists' competence, ensuring they possess the requisite knowledge and skills for safe and effective practice. Upholding the integrity of the NAPLEX is paramount, and directly impacts the quality of health care delivered by pharmacist licensees. Any compromise in the exam's integrity could lead to the licensure of unqualified individuals, posing potential risks to public health.

The responsibility for maintaining this integrity extends beyond NABP; it is a shared commitment among all stakeholders, including our member boards. Your dedication is essential in safeguarding the trust and confidence of boards of pharmacy and the public alike, ensuring that the NAPLEX remains a reliable measure of pharmacy competence.

In addition to our ongoing commitment to the integrity of the examination, this year, NABP introduced the NAPLEX Advantage™ service. This low-stakes exam service is designed to assist schools and colleges of pharmacy in preparing their students for the NAPLEX. NAPLEX Advantage features a unique practice exam conducted in a secure campus testing environment, tailored to simulate the actual high-stakes exam conditions. The NAPLEX Advantage practice exam incorporates items from previous NAPLEX iterations, promising relevance and freshness in preparation for the NAPLEX.

A key component of the service is the robust performance reports provided. These reports are invaluable tools for both students and schools. Students can use individual performance reports to tailor their study strategies, focusing on areas that need improvement. Schools receive their

students' reports, as well as a comprehensive aggregate report that includes detailed cohort performance data across P-levels and data benchmarking against national trends. These tools can help schools identify potential curriculum adjustments to better prepare students to meet licensure requirements.

In addition to the NAPLEX, another crucial examination provided by NABP is the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination® (MPJE®). The MPJE evaluates licensure candidates' understanding and application of laws and regulations specific to the jurisdiction in which they seek licensure. This examination plays a vital role in ensuring that pharmacists are well-versed in the legal aspects of pharmacy practice, contributing to safe and effective patient care.

To further illustrate the value of the MPJE, I'd like to take a moment to share a recent video released by NABP.

Building on our commitment to supporting licensure candidates, NABP has introduced a new score report for those who do not pass the MPJE, enhancing the resources available to aid in their exam preparation. The updated MPJE performance report provides a breakdown of a candidate's performance in each competency area. This information is also provided to the boards of pharmacy to aid in licensure decisions.

Another significant part of NABP's efforts to expand our examination services is the Association's ongoing

initiative to develop a uniform pharmacy jurisprudence examination, or UPJE. This initiative stems from a resolution adopted at the 118th NABP Annual Meeting in 2022 that tasked NABP with evaluating the formation of a national standardized pharmacy jurisprudence examination, and from the subsequent decision by the Executive Committee to develop such an exam.

The goal of this effort is to streamline pharmacist licensure across states by providing an additional option for assessing jurisprudence competence by leveraging the commonality of state laws. This initiative has received support from both NABP members and esteemed pharmacy professionals. The UPJE Steering Committee convened in June of last year. Experts on the committee put forth several recommendations that were considered prior to the development of this examination, which is set to be implemented in 2026.

Board of pharmacy members are providing vital guidance and expertise, continuing to be deeply involved in development of the UPJE. As experts, they are carefully considering both affordability and quality assurance to ensure a fair and equitable exam for all candidates. In collaboration with NABP staff and stakeholders, they are defining core competencies, reviewing resources, and establishing a comprehensive exam blueprint. Their leadership is essential in navigating the complexities of regulatory assessment and advancing the

pharmacy profession. It's important to note that the UPJE is envisioned as an additional resource for boards, rather than a sole mandate. Our goal is to provide states with a diverse array of tools to measure candidates' regulatory competency to protect public health, ensuring they can select the ones that best align with their specific requirements.

Now I've talked a lot about our NABP toolbox, and at this time I'd like to bring it back to the beginning and the quote I shared from Pearl S. Buck. "If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday." The future is full of unknowns and in order for us to understand this new frontier of pharmacy practice, we will have to do it together and search back to yesterday to move forward tomorrow. As we do move forward preparing for tomorrow, NABP will continue to provide the tools, resources, and technology to assist each and every member in the challenges and opportunities that are presented to them.

I continue to be humbled and honored to be your executive director for this vital Association and to share these insights with you. I am excited (and nervous) to see what the future of pharmacy brings, and I trust that our commitment – as NABP members – to innovation, collaboration, and excellence remains steadfast as we navigate the evolving health care landscape. Thank you for your dedication and partnership in this journey toward a healthier, safer, and more accessible health care system.