



118<sup>th</sup> NABP Annual Meeting  
May 19-21, 2022

# Report of the President

**Presented by:**

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Good morning! I am so pleased to stand before you in person today. What a privilege it is to work with such innovative and resilient colleagues, from the members of my own board of pharmacy, to the executive committee of this Association, to the awesome NABP staff, guests and colleagues representing other health care organizations, and to all of you — the members that make NABP's mission a reality every day. In the face of the pandemic, we've achieved so much together to protect public health, even if from behind our computer screens at times. In fact, just being able to convene our meeting here this week is a testament to all your efforts that expanded our vision to advance the protection of public health. Efforts such as regulations related to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing and vaccination by pharmacy personnel, temporary licensure of nonresident pharmacists to address shortages, and other COVID-19 mitigation and safety protocols are some of the many ways we as the pharmacy regulatory community are helping our country move out of the pandemic. It's happening because of your efforts. Please take a moment to recognize this accomplishment.

This Annual Meeting's theme is "Expanding Our Vision to Advance

Public Health Protection." Of course, National Association of Boards of Pharmacy® (NABP®) and the boards of pharmacy have never stopped in our shared mission of protecting the public health, even during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the fact that we're all here together for the first time in three years does feel a bit like a reset. That shift in perspective can be an asset, as it gives us a chance to refocus our priorities as an Association.

The pandemic may have been part of the impetus for greatly expanding our vision, but we are also continuing the momentum that has carried NABP and the member boards through many regulatory and patient safety challenges. My presidential initiative focused on prescription drug importation, which is just one example of the many challenges facing the states recently, and I thank you for your support on this issue throughout the past year.

During the pandemic, we all saw the disturbing pattern of bad actors taking advantage of the situation for profit. Of particular concern were the illegal online drug outlets selling fake products marketed as cures for or treatments to prevent COVID-19. Even prior to the pandemic, NABP's digital health team had identified the pervasive issue of websites that purport to be Canadian pharmacies, enticing American patients to purchase "medications" that are really often harmful, counterfeit drugs. These criminals know that the appearance

of being a Canadian pharmacy is an easy way to attract American customers looking for medications at supposedly lower prices. While NABP applauds legal efforts to lower the high cost of prescription drugs, NABP is concerned that directing states to oversee prescription drug importation may be a daunting task, and encouraging importation may lead to further proliferation of these rogue online pharmacy websites although now they will purport to be authorized to import medications from foreign countries. Thoughtful action must be taken to address challenges surrounding this issue as states continue to grapple with legislation to authorize drug importation or develop their importation plans for submission and review by the federal government.

Effective November 30, 2020, a final rule published by the Food and Drug Administration, Office of Management and Budget allows states to establish a wholesale prescription drug importation program for products distributed from Canada. The rule pushes most of the requirements to the states for implementation and requires states to ensure that the supply chain remains secure, including testing and determining financial savings. Over the last few years, 11 states have had state bills introduced on this issue. My initiative has been to provide guidance to states, the federal government, and boards of pharmacy on regulatory oversight processes to help mitigate risks to the global supply chain and

ensure the safety and integrity of prescription medications that may be imported into the country.

As part of my initiative, NABP convened the Task Force on State Oversight of Drug Importation. Task force members examined the current regulatory environment and the challenges states face in regulating importation. They also reviewed NABP programs to determine how they may support states that implement these programs and discussed development of educational tools to assist states in the oversight of drug importation. The task force made five recommendations, including specific suggestions for how NABP can help to educate the boards and other stakeholders about importation bills and related issues, as well as further suggestions for improved collaboration and communication with regulatory groups and agencies in Canada and the United States.

I want to extend my personal thanks and appreciation to those members who volunteered to serve on this task force and share their expertise on the topic.

We've also worked to address prescription drug importation issues by providing educational opportunities for pharmacists and board members. This has come in the form of continuing pharmacy education, including live and home study webinars, and resources provided through the NABP website, including a blog article and video. If and when legislation is considered in your state on this issue, please remember that these resources are available to assist you.

The video also goes into more detail on each of the three offerings provided to help the boards maintain the security of the drug supply chain and protect patients. Today, I'd like to provide an update on one of those offerings detailed in the video: development of tools intended to assist with implementation of new regulations arising from the Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA), Title II of the Drug Quality and Security Act, or DQSA. In response

to feedback from a meeting of boards of pharmacy and other regulators, NABP has rolled out the DSCSA State Regulator Pilot. This pilot was held to facilitate discussions between states and authorized trading partners in anticipation of implementation of the electronic and interoperable exchange of product information in 2023. As many of you may be aware, prescription drug products moving through the supply chain must be electronically tracked as of 2023. Industry plans are under way for how this can be accomplished, and NABP is actively engaged to ensure boards of pharmacy have access to information necessary for proper oversight.

Over 150 individuals representing 100 organizations participated in our first information webinar held on January 11. To follow up on the webinar, NABP sent out a survey to solicit pilot participants. Based on that response, NABP conducted a pilot that simulated multiple scenarios where regulators would communicate with authorized trading partners as they conduct investigations into suspect drug products. The pilot ran from the end of January to late March, at which point the participants met with other key stakeholders to discuss the pilot outcomes and what the ideal system looks like to them. The final report on the state regulator pilot is now available on NABP's website. The report details plans for how NABP will build tools that will help ensure that the boards of pharmacy are able to continue to keep suspect and illegitimate products out of the supply chain and away from patients.

Another area where we've expanded our vision is the .Pharmacy Verified Websites Program, which will be separated into two distinct offerings: accreditation and .pharmacy domain registration. By offering the accreditation and the domain name registration as two products, NABP provides greater clarity to those that rely on the existing accreditation. The .pharmacy domain will still be restricted, and only granted to verified entities. NABP will be rebranding the portion of the program

currently responsible for application review. This summer, the .Pharmacy Program will be renamed Health Care Merchant Accreditation. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting change.

The program identifies online pharmacies and pharmacy-related websites around the globe as safe and legitimate. Since .pharmacy is a verified top-level domain, websites must meet program standards to qualify, including appropriate licensure or registration where located and where customers reside. Consumers can easily identify the site is safe when they see .pharmacy in the web address. Program participants are automatically eligible to advertise on Google, Yahoo!, and Bing, as well as on Twitter, Reddit, Snapchat, and TikTok. In addition, they comply with Visa and Mastercard's card-not-present policies.

In 2021, NABP also launched an educational campaign that focused on educating consumers about the dangers of buying medications from unlicensed pharmacies online and through social media. The campaign included television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) that were broadcast throughout the US. The PSAs featured the personal story of Ed and Mary Ternan, who are the founders of the nonprofit Song for Charlie. Ed and Mary shared how they lost their son Charlie to a fake prescription pill purchased through social media. Charlie was a senior in college, preparing for a job interview and was simply trying to get relief for back pain that occasionally flared up from a previous injury. Sadly, the pill contained illicit fentanyl and within minutes that one pill had killed Charlie. NABP was extremely grateful to have Ed and Mary along on this journey with us. Ed and Mary also participated in a satellite media tour with me, where we were interviewed by approximately 25 local and national television and radio stations. As a mother of two daughters, who are both in the audience with us today, this was an extremely meaningful experience. No one should have to endure the pain

of losing someone to a counterfeit drug purchased online.

In addition to thanking Ed and Mary, I'd also like to thank the boards of pharmacy and other stakeholders who helped to contribute by spreading this message using the campaign's patient education kit. The kit includes sample social media posts, images, videos, and sample articles, with the goal of educating patients about the risks of buying medicine online and urging them to always buy from safe, verified websites using NABP's free search tool. Because of its success in 2021, the campaign is continuing throughout 2022 and these resources are still available for download to all of you on the Association's patient-focused website. Please continue to educate patients, as well as our colleagues in other health care professions, on this important issue by urging them to visit [safe.pharmacy](https://www.safe.pharmacy) to find safe online pharmacies.

Another issue related to patient safety involves medication errors. This year, members volunteered to serve on the Task Force on Safety-Sensitive Measures to Review Medication Errors. This task force, which met in October 2021, was charged with finding ways to assist the state boards of pharmacy in developing alternative regulatory approaches to review medication errors with the goal of preventing future errors. The members reviewed systems and best practices to reduce medication errors and increase patient safety. They recommended that such practices be implemented as part of a just culture regulatory approach. The task force also examined language in the Model State Pharmacy Act and Model Rules of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy to determine if changes should be made to support better patient outcomes.

This year, NABP also convened a new committee to help ensure that the Model Act reflects the most current regulatory environment. As most of you know, the Model Act provides our member boards of pharmacy with language that may

be used when developing state laws or board rules. This language is routinely updated each year based on member input from a variety of sources. The Model Act Review Committee helps to supplement those updates by conducting a thorough review of the entire document every five years, helping to ensure that the Model Act is kept relevant, consistent, and up to date. The first Model Act Review Committee met four times in the second half of 2021 and made a variety of recommendations that were reviewed by the Executive Committee.

While we are on the topic, I'd like to take a moment to recognize all our members who volunteered this year by serving on a committee or task force. These task forces and committees are a true testament to what we can achieve when we collaborate with one another and learn from each other's own unique professional challenges, expertise, and experiences.

Task force reports are available on the NABP website.

Another important way to help build relationships and foster collaboration between the boards is through NABP's forums. For 12 years, NABP has held these forums to provide a unique opportunity for collaboration among three different groups – executive officers, board members, and board compliance officers and legal counsel. Continuing the theme of expanding our vision, we are reimagining the forums starting in the fall of this year. A new Leadership Academy will be offered just prior to the Executive Officer Forum, giving executive officers an opportunity to discuss leadership topics specific to boards of pharmacy and NABP. In addition to learning about what NABP has to offer members, during this day and a half-long programming, participants will explore strategies for addressing potential challenges they may encounter as executive directors. In late November, we plan to hold the Medication Safety Training Academy, which is intended to help boards identify, assess,

and determine effective regulatory approaches for medication errors. In addition, we will be changing the timing of the forums during the next few years to streamline scheduling for executive officers, compliance officers, board counsel, and members. Be assured that we will not be reducing the frequency of the forums. Indeed, with many new meetings on the horizon we are making adjustments to ensure the most efficient use of your time.

If you haven't yet been able to attend a forum, I strongly encourage you to do so. NABP has traditionally covered the expense for one person from every board to attend the meeting. The forums are a unique opportunity for open discussion on pressing topics with your colleagues from across the country, and the forums are also the place where many existing NABP initiatives and services were conceptualized.

Another great way to network within this Association is through your district meeting. Most of the business conducted at each Annual Meeting starts at the district level, including nominating candidates for open Executive Committee member positions and developing proposed resolutions that are brought forth for all to discuss and vote on.

Another unique opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues is the fifth, biennial Tri-Regulator Symposium which will take place in Alexandria, VA, in October of this year. These meetings are important opportunities for NABP and our sister organizations representing the medical and nursing boards to discuss common issues, develop dialogues, and build consensus. Attendance is limited and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, but please contact your executive director if you are interested in attending. The invitations to the Tri-Regulator Symposium will go out to the membership in a June mailbag; so please watch your inbox for news about registering for the event.

Before I conclude, can we take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the collaboration, the

commitment, and the resilience that has brought us to this point? Please join me in another round of applause for our colleagues.

All of you have and continue to be an inspiration, and it's been an honor to serve as your president. I look forward to continuing to work with you all as I assume the office of chairperson of the executive committee.

If you will indulge me, I would like to give a few shoutouts: the incredible staff and board members of the Virginia Board of Pharmacy, NABP staff, the Executive Committee, my mentors — many of whom are past and honorary presidents — colleagues from across the states, Jay Campbell and Tim Fensky, and most of all, my family. And to the

members of NABP, I hope that you will join me in continuing to play a role in this wonderful association for years to come. These last few years have certainly been challenging, but I know we're ready to rise to any challenge and accept the opportunity to expand our vision into the future.