



118th NABP Annual Meeting
May 19-21, 2022

Report of the Executive Director/ Secretary

Presented by:

Lemrey "Al" Carter, PharmD, MS, RPh



Good morning. I'm so pleased to be out from inside your computer screens and standing here on stage, in Phoenix, in person.

This 118th Annual Meeting of the Association is my third as your executive director/secretary, but the first where I get to see most of you "in real life." Standing here, I'm filled with renewed energy, excitement for the future of the National Association of Board of Pharmacy® (NABP®), and inspiration. And if I may, I'd like to stress the word "inspired" here today.

From the frontline health care workers that cheered on recovering patients as they were rolled through makeshift tunnels, to the nurse that sang "Amazing Grace" to colleagues working tirelessly to fight coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), I am sure that we've all heard a story during this pandemic that has inspired us. For me, the most inspiring story was published out in The New York Times about Ambar Keluskar, a pharmacist at Rossi Pharmacy, an independent pharmacy in Brooklyn, NY. Due to specific state restrictions, Rossi Pharmacy could only provide vaccines to certain older residents, and these residents had limited access to the pharmacy. Rossi Pharmacy was located in East New York, which was an area hit hard by

COVID-19. In an attempt to get more people vaccinated, Rossi Pharmacy started advertising on social media, went to community leaders to spread the word, and finally, Dr Keluskar took matters into his own hands. Dr Keluskar started driving to community centers and senior housing complexes to administer vaccines in what he deemed "pop-up" events. He was giving up to 150 doses per day after his work shifts and on his days off. He was doing this seven days a week. Now, if this isn't inspiring about the perseverance of a pharmacist and what we will do to provide patients with access to quality health care, I don't know what is.

The thought of inspiration during the most challenging of times has me thinking a lot back to my first two years with this Association. When I took the role of executive director, I did not see my first year kicking off the way that it did. And I think a lot of what got me through that time was the inspiration and dedication of the NABP staff, the membership, and everything that we all were doing to address this pandemic. This inspiration and the collective effort to come together, laugh, and, most importantly, create innovative solutions that advanced public health protection under never-before seen circumstances has motivated me to do more. For inspiring me, motivating me, and for staying true to our shared mission, I thank you all.

I will now transition from the inspiration that has motivated NABP and our membership into

providing you all with an update on NABP's activities over the past year. To start, I'd like to share a short video highlighting key NABP accomplishments.

As you can see from this video, and as you heard from Tim's and Caroline's remarks, the Association has been quite busy making progress with new and existing programs and services over the past year. In fact, the video I just played is a shortened version of our "year in review," because we had so much information to pack in. If you would like to see the full five minutes, you can view it on our YouTube channel.

Now, I'll move on to an update on my three-year strategic plan, which focuses on NABP programs, data integration, and building relationships.

In April, NABP launched NABP Verify, a service designed to support boards' existing and emerging licensure verification needs. This program was built on lessons learned in 2020, when states were issuing emergency orders and permitting out-of-state licensed pharmacists, interns, and technicians to engage in various aspects of pharmacy practice via the NABP Emergency Passport Program. The Passport Program significantly reduced board of pharmacy workload and the administrative burdens brought on by processing requests for temporary and emergency licensure during the COVID-19 pandemic. It ensured that the practitioners obtaining these temporary licenses

had active licenses in good standing in other states. Beyond COVID-19, the passport served to support boards through responses to other emergencies and disasters, including hurricanes.

Built on the success of the Emergency Passport Program, NABP Verify is a license monitoring service that demonstrates a pharmacist's licenses are in good standing. Let me be clear in saying that NABP Verify is not an authorization to practice pharmacy -- boards of pharmacy must be part of the NABP Verify program and recognize through statute, regulation, or policy the NABP Verify credential in order for credentialed holders to provide out-of-state, remote pharmacy-related services in the applicable state or jurisdiction.

Pharmacists who participate in the program will pay an annual fee for the ongoing monitoring and verification services. They will also receive a secure "digital badge" that will enable them to easily share the NABP Verify credential and state-specific credentials via social media, email, and other methods, thereby allowing regulators and employers to verify their credentials. Regulators can also verify credentials via NABP e-Profile Connect.

We piloted this program with the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy, which revised its rules regarding remote medication order processing to include the NABP Verify program. I'd like to personally thank Jay Campbell and his staff for working with the NABP team on the program's launch. As more states opt to recognize NABP Verify and are added to the program, pharmacists can log in to their NABP e-Profile and apply for additional states to be added to their subscription at any time and for no additional fee.

If your board is interested in learning more about how the program may be implemented in your state, please find Bill Cover or Neal Watson during this meeting, or send an email to the NABP Member Relations and Government Affairs team.

Please note, we recognize the value

the NABP Emergency Passport Program has had for states handling natural disasters and other emergencies. Therefore, we will continue to make this program available to member boards as necessary to deal with temporary emergency responses.

For our digitization initiatives, we have successfully transitioned all of our accreditation services into the e-Profile system. This is the final step in bringing all our programs and services into a cohesive customer interface for individuals and businesses, supported by a single, powerful database. This further enhances our e-Profile data, providing boards with even more comprehensive, accurate, and robust data that can be used in licensure decisions. As we look ahead, we are in the process of streamlining our accreditation services, so that these services may be bundled with other programs for customers. We also continue to enhance the tools used by our accreditation surveyors, such as providing an online inspection tool for surveys. The more we automate surveyor and staff tools, the more efficient the application process will be for accreditation customers.

In addition, we will soon be launching a new search tool on the NABP website. The search tool will serve as a one-stop shop for verifying all NABP-accredited businesses and entities.

Our publications are also going more digital. We recently revamped the NAPLEX®/MPJE® and FPGEE® Candidate Application Bulletins, using a more mobile-friendly digital book format that enhances navigation, engages the reader in key pieces of information, and ensures readers are always getting the most up-to-date examination information. In April, we also launched the digital version of our monthly newsletter, Innovations®. Compared to the static Innovations pdfs of the past, the new digital version is mobile-friendly, provides better navigation and sharing options, and will soon include access to bonus multimedia and other "digital-only" content. And,

as you've noticed, we've also moved almost all of our Annual Meeting materials digital, so that you can easily access these materials on your phones and tablets throughout the meeting using the mobile app.

Finally, I'd like to share with you the progress that we have made on initiatives through our many new and old partnerships that NABP maintains. With that, I would like to first thank all of the organizations and their leadership that are here today attending our meeting. We are grateful for your partnership and collaboration as we continue to tackle the many issues and initiatives that serve our mission to protect public health. One of these initiatives is our continued partnership with the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy and Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education to develop tools to better address curriculum and prepare pharmacists for future practice. NABP also continues to support efforts from and is collaborating with pharmacy organizations to address patient safety and well-being, while also working with our membership to provide tools and resources to address working conditions. In particular, we recently expressed support for the American Pharmacists Association and the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations in their development of the Pharmacist's Fundamental Responsibilities and Rights document. While we recognize that certain provisions of the document pertaining to specific business models may fall outside of the regulatory purview of the boards of pharmacy, NABP supports efforts to ensure that pharmacy practice occurs in working environments that are conducive to the well-being of pharmacy staff and the safety of all patients.

And as Tim explained yesterday, NABP is also part of the Opioid Regulatory Collaborative. Along with the Federation of State Medical Boards, National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and American Association of Dental Boards, we understand the impact COVID-19 has had on the opioid epidemic and

opioid use disorders (OUDs), and we are working together collaboratively to address the lack of training, the stigma associated with OUDs, and access challenges. We must do our part to best protect the public while ensuring patients have access to care.

In response to a recommendation made by the 2021-2022 Task Force on Safety-Sensitive Measures to Review Medication Errors, NABP will also be developing medication safety training for board members, compliance officers, and NABP accreditation surveyors that focuses on applying just culture approaches to medication errors. This training will be known as the Medication Safety Training Academy, with the first Academy being held this November. And per the task force's recommendation, we will be utilizing existing resources, such as the forums, as educational tools to help make an ongoing commitment to support evolving medication safety efforts. With this in mind, beginning in 2024, we will be holding the Medication Safety Training Academy

in conjunction with the Executive Officer Forum. The Executive Officer Forum will take place on days one and two, and the Medication Safety Training Academy on days two and three. Day two would consist of joint sessions between the two groups.

In addition to our efforts to build relationships with outside organizations, we are also working on new initiatives examining diversity, equity, and inclusion across the boards of pharmacy, as well as across NABP leadership and committees. As part of this effort, NABP will be taking an active role in the development of policies and guidelines that state boards of pharmacy may use to assess and address diversity and equity in their board make-up. These guidelines are being researched and developed with the support of a grant obtained from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. We believe that NABP is positioned as a powerful influencer and supportive ally in bringing the issue of racial disparities in health care to the attention of policymakers

and practitioners. Through the grant, NABP and several other organizations are partnering together to address health disparities, improve health outcomes, and increase representation of minorities in health care.

Finally, I would like to once again take this time to thank you all for your resilience, flexibility, dedication, and hard work, as well as for the moments of joy we have shared over the past year. I look forward to continuing these important discussions and partnerships with all of you as we work toward our common goal of advancing public health protection. And so, I would like to leave you all with a quote from Winston Churchill as we embark on the year ahead:

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.” I applaud each and every one of you here today for the courage you have shown to continue to fight for patient safety, patient access, and the protection of public health. Thank you.