



118th NABP Annual Meeting
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Report of the Incoming President

Presented by:

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Good morning, everyone! I hope you have found this Annual Meeting to be a source of renewed energy and inspiration for the work that lies ahead of us. I

myself have truly enjoyed and valued the time to catch up – in person – with old National Association of Board of Pharmacy® (NABP®) friends as well as meet new colleagues. My experience these last few days has further encouraged me as I step into the role of NABP president, because I know all of you will be right there with me, as partners in the mission to protect public health.

Sometimes, it feels to me like this pandemic has lasted much longer than two years. As if two years weren't enough! I think that feeling is, in part, due to how much this pandemic has changed the health care landscape, including pharmacy practice and regulation. From inspection requirements to emergency licensure, it seems that there are few aspects of our profession that have not been impacted in some way by the pandemic. While these changes can be daunting, I'm appreciative of the fact that these changes have provided us with new opportunities as pharmacists and as regulators.

For example, the pandemic placed many pharmacists in the opportune position of being able to continue evolving their role beyond the

conventional medication management and dispensing. Pharmacists have long been a trusted source for health care. Now, we administer diagnostic tests and vaccines, as well as dispense treatments for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). These efforts have been enhanced by pharmacies' unique positions in communities throughout the country, especially in places where other health care providers may not be readily available. This advantage was further enhanced when state and federal governments relaxed certain requirements and restrictions related to pharmacist and pharmacy technician licensing and scope of practice. Altogether, these regulatory changes have had a positive impact on patient health and safety. Further, telehealth capabilities were expanded, allowing for patients in rural or underserved communities to access pharmacist care. The conclusion seems clear: when pharmacists are enabled to work to the full extent of their education and training, and to utilize the latest technology, patients benefit.

To that end, I'm pleased to announce that my presidential initiative is to facilitate a new pharmacy practice model that promotes and enhances patient safety. The initiative builds on the efforts of the NABP members and stakeholders who served on task forces that explored these issues, especially those of the Work Group to Consider Permanently Expanding Certain Waivered Provisions and the Task Force on Workplace Safety and

Well-Being, both held in 2021.

In August, NABP convened a work group to review various legal provisions that had been waived by the boards of pharmacy during the pandemic. Based on the positive patient safety and public health outcomes that resulted from the waivers, the work group recommended that many of the waivers remain permanent post-pandemic. For example, specific waivers for permanent consideration include: the authority to dispense 30-day emergency refills for maintenance medications; the authority to order and administer Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments-waived point-of-care testing and prescribe associated medications; and the authority to order and administer all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices vaccines for pharmacists. The work group also recommended expansion of pharmacy technician scope of practice by pharmacists' delegation based on training, skill level, and experience, including vaccine administration.

Last year, NABP also convened the Task Force on Workplace Safety and Well-Being, which met at NABP Headquarters in November. This task force was charged with examining pharmacy workplace safety and pharmacist well-being and how those things affect patient safety. Task force members also reviewed existing guidelines and objective tools that address these issues and made recommendations regarding their use. After hearing a guest

presentation from a member of the American Pharmacists Association (APHA), it became clear that pharmacy workplace demands have significantly increased. This increase is in large part due to COVID-19, with an unprecedented demand for testing and vaccinations. This increase is compounded with the stress caused by patient demands to dispense medication against the pharmacist's professional judgment. These issues have been further worsened by staffing shortages.

The task force ultimately recommended that NABP should support APhA and the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations's Pharmacist's Fundamental Responsibilities and Rights document, but also acknowledged that certain provisions may fall outside the regulatory purview of the boards of pharmacy. The task force made five other recommendations, including calls for collaboration with relevant stakeholders and the endorsement of the recommendations of the Task Force on Safety Sensitive Measures to Review Medication Errors. Several changes to the Model State Pharmacy Act and Model Rules of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy were also recommended.

Building on the valuable work of these groups, my initiative will begin with a comprehensive review of the current pharmacy regulatory environment, taking into account pharmacy education and other

external factors that impact patient safety.

Three key areas will be identified:

1. Barriers in existing statutes or regulations that limit patient access to medication and care;
2. Opportunities to increase patient safety by enabling pharmacists to practice at the top of their education and training; and
3. Extrinsic factors that foster unsafe working environments when delivering patient care not already identified by the Working Conditions Task Force.

Task forces and/or work groups will be used to conduct the reviews, with the ultimate goal of developing a set of recommendations that can be implemented and communicated by the boards of pharmacy and other stakeholders.

Implementing this initiative will require input from many individuals, so I'd like to ask for your help. As is the case every year, our task forces and committees play a vital role in shaping strategies and finding common ground to establish and reach goals, including those set out in my initiative.

I will be appointing members to this year's task forces and standing committees soon, including a task force on expanding pharmacists' scope of practice. Please consider sharing your expertise by volunteering to serve on the Association's standing committees and task forces. These opportunities ensure that your voice

is included in the discussions that shape the Association's future. If you are interested in participating, or want to learn more, visit the newly redesigned members section of the NABP website. There, you can use the online volunteer form to send your letter of interest and current resumé to my attention. The deadline to submit is June 3, 2022.

I am honored and grateful to have this opportunity to serve as your president in the coming year. I appreciate your support and look forward to further collaboration and communication as we move forward.

I read somewhere that the most dangerous phrase in the English language is "we've always done it this way." I certainly think there is a great deal of truth in that. We will need to review current regulations that don't address or enhance patient safety in today's environment or provide what patients now expect from their pharmacist post-pandemic. I also saw a quote from a great philosopher, Winnie the Pooh – "I always get to where I'm going by walking away from where I've been." We will need to continue to walk away from regulation that is no longer applicable to an evolving practice in order to get to a place that is protective of patient safety and safe for pharmacists and technicians, as well. It's only with your collective input that we will be able to walk to where we're going.

Thank you!