



120<sup>th</sup> NABP Annual Meeting  
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# Report of the President

## **Presented by:**

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Good morning, everyone! It is an honor and a pleasure to be with you at the 120<sup>th</sup> NABP Annual Meeting.

A year ago, I stood before you and shared my

story about the importance of healing and embracing ways to reset and recover after difficult experiences. I also acknowledged that the pharmacy profession has been in a “world of hurt,” especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which tested our resilience and well-being as pharmacists, regulators, and as human beings.

Today, I want to revisit that theme and the steps we’ve taken together to start healing our profession. Last year, I shared with you my love for daffodils, and how they represent an important part of my own “reset button.” This year, I’d like to talk to you about another favorite flower: the daylily. Daylilies are among the most popular and widely grown flowers in the world. They come in a beautiful array of colors, shapes, and sizes, and can adapt to almost any climate and soil condition. They are also known for their unique blooming cycle: each flower only lasts for one day, but the plant produces many flowers that bloom continuously over several weeks.

Daylilies have different meanings and symbolism in various cultures.

In China, they represent the bond between a parent and child, as well as forgetting the past and moving on with life. In Japan, they symbolize wealth, success, and power. More generally, daylilies have been symbols of innocence, purity, devotion, happiness, and new beginnings.

And that’s why they are relevant to the remarks I will deliver today. Pharmacists, like daylilies, are adaptable and resilient. We are essential, and valuable, playing a vital role in our patient’s overall health and in making the world a better place.

With all these positives, we also need to think about our health and happiness, and how it is impacted as we adapt to challenging times. After a long pharmacy shift, confronting the modern stressors in life, and tending to our personal responsibilities at home, how do we ensure that another daylily will bloom in the morning? To be effective and to ensure our continued ability to help others, we must also take care of ourselves and each other. There is a role for the regulator and the pharmacist in this vital work, and we’ve made progress together this past year.

Specifically, my initiative as NABP President over the last year has been to provide resources to support the mental health and well-being of pharmacists and pharmacy staff.

To achieve this, we focused on two main objectives:

- First, including mental health and well-being considerations in NABP accreditation programs, which is still undergoing internal staff review.
- Second, adding a new resource page on the NABP website to promote a variety of tools and information.

One of the first things we did after the initiative was announced was convene the Task Force on Pharmacist and Pharmacy Personnel Mental Health and Well-Being, which met in August 2023. The task force examined how work-induced stress and pre-existing mental health conditions can affect the safety and quality of pharmacy practice. The task force also recommended resources to help pharmacy personnel cope with stress, burnout, and impairment, such as emotional intelligence training, mentorship, peer support, wellness programs, and treatment and recovery options.

Additionally, the task force recommended amendments to *Model State Pharmacy Act and Model Rules of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy* to address mental health and well-being, touching on definitions, standards of practice, reporting requirements, confidentiality protections, and disciplinary actions. The task force recommended that boards of pharmacy adopt and implement the amended *Model Act* language and collaborate with other stakeholders to promote a culture

of wellness and resilience in the pharmacy profession.

Another important outcome of my initiative was the Well-Being Solutions Summit hosted by NABP in collaboration with the American Pharmacists Association and the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, which met in June 2023.

The summit brought together members of the pharmacy workforce from all pharmacy settings to identify key actions that will improve workplace conditions by addressing day-to-day challenges, removing obstacles to well-being, and advancing practice models for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. It also built on previous conferences, consensus statements, and recommendations with the specific intent to generate solutions and actions.

The Solutions Summit was centered around five themes:

- practice advancement,
- mental health,
- workforce,
- regulations and requirements, and
- technology and workflow efficiencies.

Participants discussed next steps and identified actionable solutions to implement.

These solutions include ensuring the psychological and physical safety of pharmacists, and determining employer accountability for ensuring workplace conditions support their well-being.

Other next steps identified included:

- advancing technologies and workflow efficiencies that balance resources, workload, and cognitive load;
- minimizing overly restrictive regulations and requirements while allowing for flexible and innovative policies supportive of new and emerging patient care models;
- recruiting, retaining, and empowering an engaged and equitable pharmacy workforce; and

- identifying sustainable practice model advancements that offer patient-centered professional autonomy and flexibility.

Of course, these were not the only important meetings and task forces that NABP held this year.

First, let's talk briefly about the Task Force on Shared Pharmacy Services, Automated Pharmacy Systems, Remote Dispensing Sites, and Telepharmacy. This important task force met in October to review the *Model Act* sections pertaining to these topics and to suggest needed revisions. The Task Force's recommendations underscore the pressing need for boards of pharmacy, regulators, and practicing pharmacists to modernize pharmacy practice in response to evolving trends and challenges.

This approach includes addressing issues such as declining enrollment in pharmacy schools, shortages of qualified pharmacists, and the need for efficiency and productivity enhancements. Boards of pharmacy are encouraged to collaborate with stakeholders to update regulatory frameworks to accommodate new practice models and technologies, ensuring patient access to medications, particularly in underserved areas. Efforts should also focus on promoting collaboration among pharmacists and other health care stakeholders and educating the public about their role in patient care. By proactively adapting to innovative technologies and practice models, boards of pharmacy and pharmacists can ensure the continued delivery of quality pharmacy services to patients.

Next, I want to discuss the Task Force to Create an Industry Standard for Pharmacy Technician Scope of Practice and Entry-Level Requirements to Support Interstate Portability. During a lively discussion, the task force acknowledged the diversity in current state regulations and the expanded role of pharmacy technicians under emergency provisions like the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act, and with that in mind, proposed

recommendations for aligning licensure requirements and enhancing technician qualifications.

Key recommendations include incorporating pharmacy technicians into existing licensure transfer processes, conducting a comprehensive gap analysis of states' education and training requirements, and amending the *Model Act* to accommodate pharmacy technician licensure transfer. These initiatives aim to promote consistency, ensure competency, and facilitate mobility within the pharmacy technician workforce while upholding public health standards.

Now, as we reflect on these insights and recommendations put forth by the task forces, I would like us to embrace a forward-thinking approach to pharmacy practice and regulation. Looking to the future, we must continue to innovate and adapt to meet the evolving needs of patients and the health care landscape.

One important way we can help each other is to collaborate, and one important opportunity to do so is through NABP's Forums. NABP continues to hold the forums to give members a crucial opportunity to collaborate among diverse groups, share common challenges, and discuss ideas for solutions. The 2024 forums will be tailored to executive officers and board members. In addition, a "Forum Week" for executive officers, board members, compliance officers, and legal counsel will take place in 2025.

Also this year, the annual Leadership Academy will be returning and offered as a devoted session during the Executive Officer Forum. The Leadership Academy provides a focused, additional opportunity to discuss relevant leadership topics. Further, participants will explore strategies for addressing potential challenges they may encounter as executive directors.

If you have not yet been able to attend a forum, I strongly encourage you to do so. You can find the meeting dates on the NABP website.

And, executive officers, look for details coming to your email box shortly after this meeting. NABP has traditionally covered the expense for one person from every board to attend each forum.

Another wonderful 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. These

resolutions set the direction for NABP actions and policies, and they start with you and your peers in the districts.

As I conclude my term as president, I think it's fitting to be here in Fort Worth. More than four decades ago, I began my career at Harris Methodist Hospital just a few miles from here. Now, I'm here again, looking at a new beginning for our profession.

Obviously, pharmacy is changing, and the future of this profession might look quite different from how it was 44 years ago. The way for

us to weather these changes is to see them as opportunities so we can continue our vital public health mission. And along the way, we must look out for each other, and keep stock of our own mental and physical well-being as well as that of our staff, peers, and colleagues.

Thank you so much for this opportunity to serve as your president over this last year. I look forward to my continued work with the Executive Committee and to years of collaboration ahead.