

North Dakota Pharmacists Association

2021 Annual Report

Michael D. Schwab, EVP

I would like to start out by saying thank you to our board members who have dedicated their time and talents this past year. Your dedication, insight, support, and time are greatly appreciated by many, especially me. I would also like to personally thank Mr. Jesse Johnson and Dr. Jesse Rue who both work in our office. They truly do great work and our office is lucky to have them working for all of us!

It is great to finally see all of you in person! The past couple of years have been very demanding of all of you. All of us have been touched by the pandemic in many ways, both professionally and personally. You have all done a remarkable job and it has not gone unnoticed. From COVID testing, to COVID vaccinations, to modifying your work flow, to taking on addition workload and stress, and in many cases risking your lives, pharmacy in ND stood tall, answered the call and showed why pharmacy in ND is as strong and committed as they come! Thank you from me, my family, friends and all the lives you have touched!

We hope you continue to find value in your Association. Below is a summary of the activities, services and opportunities made available to you through the NDPhA. As you know, this report only highlights some of the work your Association has done on your behalf over the past year.

Collaboration and Networking: Over the past year, members of NDPhA and staff have represented the Association at a number of functions. This representation provides an avenue for the sharing of knowledge, best practices, new opportunities, timely information, and the promotion of the profession. Listed below are some of the areas Association staff and members participated in this past year.

- Liaison with the NDSU College of Health Professions including but not limited to Opportunities Night (sponsor), White Coat Ceremony, Student Scholarships, pharmacy student rotations, Hooding Ceremony, and other initiatives.
- Liaison with the ND Department of Health. We currently participate in and support the Million Hearts grant. We continue our support and work with the Department on other initiatives such as COVID-19 testing by pharmacies, COVID vaccinations, COVID-19 antivirals, general immunizations, etc.
- Continue to distribute COVID-19 guidance and information to pharmacists and pharmacies from multiple national organizations and federal entities.
- Liaison with the ND Department of Human Services. Represent the Association on the ND Medical Advisory Committee – Modernizing Medicaid. Participate in the Departments Stop the Overdose Campaign through the Behavioral Health Division and advocate for additional payment models for MTM services and medical billing opportunities.
- Liaison with Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota and Prime Therapeutics.
- Liaison with Sanford Health Plan, Sanford facilities and Optum Rx.
- NDPhA continued their involvement with the ND Rural Health Association and their policy committee.

- Liaison with the ND Board of Pharmacy. Help to provide education and advocacy regarding laws, rules, and programs.
- Participated on various national conference calls and national meetings such as American Pharmacists Association, National Community Pharmacists Association, FDA, DEA, CMS, and National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations.
- Participate in ND Health Information Network meetings. We are currently working with them on establishing a direct connection to their health information network.
- Participant and partner with Quality Health Associates of North Dakota.
- Re-elected to the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations (NASPA) Executive Committee. Currently, serve as the Treasurer of NASPA.
- Sent numerous updates related to PBM courts cases and victories for the profession of pharmacy.
- Continue to build on our relationships with the ND Medical Association, ND Board of Medicine, ND Hospital Association, Community Healthcare Associates of the Dakotas, ND Nurses Association, ND Board of Nursing and other health related groups.

Professional Development and Education: Over the past year, the Association worked to enhance the pharmacy profession, improve patient care, provided educational opportunities, and promoted public health by showcasing the value of pharmaceutical care. These include:

- Provided ACPE accredited continued education programs during convention and promote multiple other CE opportunities throughout the year. We continue to use CEI for our own CE needs.
- NDPhA promotes and encourages pharmacies to not only participate in the About The Patient program, but to also participate in the MTM opportunities offered by DocStation, ND Medicaid and others.
- Provided opportunities to be elected or participate in leadership roles for the Association and its committees.
- Provided important information and updates from FDA, DEA, ND Medicaid, NDPERS, Medicare Part D, ND Medicaid Expansion and much more.
- Provide free and discounted certification and training programs.
- Aired announcements on radio stations throughout the year promoting the profession of pharmacy and the value of pharmacy services (October is Pharmacists Month, Prescription Drug Abuse month, Medication Safety Campaign, Drug Take Back program locations).
- Continued to promote and expand the Pharmacist Quality Commitment (PQC) Program in ND and its use by ND pharmacies. PQC is owned and operated by the National Alliance of State Pharmacy Associations and is federally recognized as only one of two Patient Safety Organizations in the country.
- NDPhA continues to support NAPT as an academy of NDPhA. NDPhA provides NAPT with office support, conferencing capabilities, website pages, selected pages in the NDPhA's Nodak Pharmacy Journal, and is the fiscal agent for NAPT.
- NDPhA continues to support Academies of NDPhA such as the LTC Academy.

Public Policy Advocacy and Education Efforts: The Association provided advocacy and educational efforts regarding federal and state issues. The 2021 Legislative session and 2021 Special Legislative session were successful. We will continue our work with the Interim Committees and various studies that impact pharmacy. Federally, there were and still are bills that NDPhA provided advocacy and education to our Congressional delegation. We also provide comments to numerous federal agencies related to pharmacy issues, proposed rules and other healthcare macro issues.

- NDPhA provided advocacy and education regarding several federal legislative bill and federal policy initiatives such as:
 - Submitted comments to Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission regarding:
 - Strengthening healthcare vertical merger guidelines,
 - PBM anticompetitive contracts and business practices,
 - Proposed Change Healthcare and United Health merger,
 - Advocated the importance of continuing pharmacists' authorities under the PREP Act in response to COVID-19.
 - Provided comments to NCOIL regarding PBM model legislation and ERISA exemptions.
 - Provided comments to NAIC regarding PBM Licensure and Regulation Model Act.
 - Some federal bills we tracked, monitored and/or provided advocacy on included:
 - H.R. 3662 – Patient Access to Urgent-Use Pharmacy Compounding Act of 2021.
 - S. 1362/H.R. 2759 was reintroduced – Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act (Provider Status bill).
 - S.1909/H.R. 3554 – Pharmacy DIR Reform to Reducing Senior Drug Costs Act.
 - H.R. 3682 – Improving Transparency to Lower Drug Costs Act.
 - H.R. 6101 – Drug Price Transparency in Medicaid Act.
- We had plenty to do during the ND 2021 Legislative Session and 2021 Special Legislative Session. We also have plenty of work to do during the current legislative interim session and committee hearings. Numerous hearings and meetings with legislators, legislative council, public officials, professional associations, and stakeholders were held related to some of the following pieces of pharmacy legislation (this does not include all pharmacy related legislation but provides some of the highlights).
 - Multiple bills related to COVID vaccine mandates, informed consent, and immunity from liability, etc.
 - HB 1010 – ND Insurance Commissioner's Budget bill – medication optimization study.
 - HB 1032 – Related to Prescription Drug Transparency – PBM, Drug Manufacturers and Insurance Carriers.
 - HB 1233 – Audit of NDPERS PBM for 2019-2021 plan years.
 - HB 1288 – Medicaid coverage of CGM devices (medical billing for pharmacists).
 - HB 1492 – 340B non-discrimination bill and permitting pharmacists to conduct COVID testing.

- SB 2170 – Related to reference rate pricing.
- SB 2209 – Related to drug importation from Canada.
- SB 2212 – Related to drug importation, reference rate pricing and to conduct a study.
- SB 2221 – Expanding immunization authority for pharmacists, 30-day emergency fills, and limited prescriptive authority for immunizations, smoking cessation and other public health issues.
- SB 2279 – Related to pharmacy technicians ability to administer drugs.
- There were many other pharmacy related pieces of legislation we tracked, monitored and/or were actively involved in.
- Provided testimony during the Employee Benefits Committee meetings related to NDPERS and their Medicare Part D through Humana.
- **Special Session** – IVERMECTIN!! Helped to defeat two different Ivermectin bills.
- Provided testimony (and continue to provide testimony) during the Interim (2021-2022) Health Care Committee hearings- some of the topics we provided testimony on included:
 - Legal update regarding PBM lawsuits for committee members.
 - DIR and other post point-of-sale fees such as rate variance fees/effective rate contracting.
 - State of Health Care in ND as it relates to the profession of pharmacy.
 - Study regarding the role of PBM's in drug pricing.
 - Study related to drug importation and reference rate pricing.
 - Study related to medication optimization.
- NDPhA participated in various legislative meetings and fundraisers during the year to promote the role of pharmacists as active healthcare providers.

NDPhA will continue its work educating and advocating for the profession of pharmacy during the current legislative interim session and committee hearings. We will also start preparing for the 2023 legislative session in the coming months.

Products and Additional Services: During the past year, the Association continued to expand the products and services that are offered to members of the Association. Some products and services include:

- Promotion of Superior Insurance (Auto Owners) as a preferred vendor for your insurance needs.
- Promotion and outreach activities regarding PACE Alliance Buying Group.
- CE opportunities for pharmacists, technicians, and students through Connect, Educate and Impact (CEI).
- Discounts for “Pharmacists Letter” and other bundled products and resources from Therapeutic Research Center (TRC). New offerings in 2022 will include PTU Elite which is a suite of training programs for pharmacists and technicians.
- Many email alerts and updates on everything pharmacy related.
- Publication and distribution of a Bi-Monthly Nodak Pharmacy Journal.
- The Association provides administrative services for the PharmAssist Committee.

- The Association provides administrative services for the Pharmacy Advancement Corporation which raises funds to provide scholarships to NDSU pharmacy students.
- Provide systems and individual advocacy and education on behalf of the profession at a local, state and federal level.
- Ability to participate in Academies and committees of NDPhA.
- Pharmacy Quality Commitment program (PQC) and Compounding Adverse Drug Event Reporting (CADER) discounts for NDPhA members.
- Discounted OSHA trainings.
- Promotion and partnership with Scriptera which will provide some additional revenue opportunities for pharmacies who are interested.

Brief 2021 Financial Overview:

In 2021, the NDPhA had \$239,000 in revenue and \$230,000 in expenses for a net income of roughly \$9,000.

Moving Forward...

We encourage you to become active, get involved and make your voice heard! If you are not a member, we invite you to become a member. Thank you to those of you who are members of your Association. I personally want to thank you and appreciate your involvement.

Moving forward, your Association will continue to build on relationships and promote the profession of pharmacy when ever the opportunity presents itself. NDPhA will continue to be fiscally responsible especially given the limited resources at this time. We will also hold firm to our commitment to advancing the ABC's of pharmacy (Association, Board and College). I look forward to working with all of you moving forward. It is truly a pleasure working for all of you.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael D. Schwab