

Message From the Chair



Dear Colleagues,

A happy belated New Year to all and for those of you who made the trip to Las Vegas it was a pleasure to be a part of the collaborative learning environment. As I head towards my final stretch as Section Chair I am feeling a bit disconnected as I find myself knee deep in deployments including CPOE, an integrated medication reconciliation solution, smart pumps, BCMA and the never ending battle of bringing together groups involving safety, quality, practice/policy and information technology to ensure success in implementing medication management system changes in an integrated environment. Clearly it is much easier to just talk about how these solutions will support institutional strategic goals and objectives. I need to keep reminding myself the importance of being the group that continues to look for the next effective solution rather than the next potential problem. We will always be faced with managing system and automation implementation risks however we can not continue to pause every time we hit a speed bump if we want to remain effective leaders in this field. We must collaborate with the healthcare IT industry on all fronts and assume leadership roles. Continuing to focus on system problems puts us in a defensive position only to react rather than drive the needed changes industry needs to deliver.

Before I move on to the main point of my message I want to pass along some important reading a member of the Executive Committee (Jeff Ramirez) passed along a few weeks ago. [Gauging The Progress Of The National HIT Initiative](#) [PDF]

This is an excellent summary of how far we have come with the Department of Health and Human Services 10-year HIT plan proposed and endorsed by President Bush in the summer of 2004. Although the findings are discouraging I believe this report serves up endless opportunities and points to our success surrounding the electronic health record certification process which turned out to be easier than expected.

The Executive Committee's proposal to the House of Delegates at the 2007 summer meeting regarding a consensus conference on pharmacy informatics was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting in January. The Committee felt this conference would serve as a focal point for direction surrounding the field of informatics and its role in the practice of pharmacy. Subsequent to our request the Council on Pharmacy Practice Management voted to recommend to the Board of Directors, that ASHP convene a multidisciplinary conference to conceptualize the characteristics of an optimal inpatient hospital pharmacy practice model. The Council believed technology and advanced technician roles would be key factors in a new practice model. After reviewing both proposals the Executive Committee supported the Council's recommendation and suggested blending the two initiatives by identifying the role and influence technology can play in removing barriers to the advancement of clinical practice and perhaps transforming the practice model.

The Executive Committee suggested the following questions be answered as part of this conference:

- When does technology become a burden to pharmacy and not a benefit?
- What is the road-map for evolving technology and practice?
- How are the resources obtained?
- How are regulatory restrictions changed to meet evolving technologies?

It is the Executive Committee's hope that the two groups can identify a new practice model that uses computers to direct our efforts to those places that provide the highest value from a pharmacist-patient perspective as opposed to wasting them on activities with little known value. Defining such a practice model will be challenging however

particularly as it relates to regulation, practice and technology (current system core functionality probably would not completely support this model). From the Executive Committee's point of view, this model will require that the Section articulate a vision for medication management supporting automation and technologies and then drive this vision out to the HIT vendor community. The Committee believes this process also cries out for our academic institutions to focus new attention on how we do things now, and to consider how practice might look in the presence of better supporting and validated from a safety perspective technologies. (Thanks to Dennis Tribble Chair- elect for this summary) Stay tuned for further details.

Thanks again for your commitment and participation ... till next time.

Sincerely,

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