

ASHP Section of Clinical Specialists and Scientists

The mission of the Section of Clinical Specialists and Scientists (SCSS) is to improve patient care by serving as a conduit for translating scientific advances in drug therapy and clinical therapeutics into the practice of pharmacy and advocating practice development and advancement.

The Section's Executive Committee has developed a strategic plan linked to the mission and goals of the Section. The goals include (1) effectively communicating the value members receive from their membership in the Section and ASHP, (2) enhancing efforts to encourage networking among Section members, (3) supporting the professional development of specialists and scientists, (4) promoting pharmacist implementation of evidence-based medicine, (5) facilitating the development of strategic internal and external partnerships, and (6) actively participating in ASHP's policy and advocacy initiatives.

SCSS continues to grow; membership increased 13% during 2005. Strong interest in the Section among students and new practitioners continues; students account for 31% of the Section membership. Approximately 60% of SCSS members select the Section as their primary section.

Educational and Networking Opportunities. The Section's Committee on Programming, chaired in 2005 by Joanne Yasuda, is charged with developing programming at an advanced level that will be of interest to clinical specialists and scientists. The committee developed an educational track for the 2005 ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting (MCM) on "Drug Dosing: An Evolving Science"; the four sessions focused on how the science of dosing has developed over the years and how it applies to current and future clinical practice. The committee also planned a session devoted to therapeutic debates, and the Section continued to coordinate the Clinical Pearls session. In collaboration with the ASHP Research and Education Foundation and the New Practitioners Forum, the Section once again provided a six-hour session at the MCM on developing research skills, aimed at new researchers. Among the topics covered in this session were study coordination, statistical analysis, and practical aspects of dealing with institutional review boards.

The 2005–2006 Committee on Programming has designated "Integrating National and International Guidelines into Clinical Practice" as the theme for the Section's programming at the 2006 MCM; four sessions on this theme in therapeutic areas such as critical care, psychology/neurology, cardiovascular, and infectious diseases will be developed. As in the past two years, a session will feature short debates in areas of therapeutic controversy, and the committee will again coordinate the Clinical Pearls session.

The Section's electronic NewsLink is distributed biweekly to more than 8500 ASHP members, providing news and current information on medical research, regulatory and health policy issues, health care, and therapeutics. The Section's e-mail discussion group provides a forum for Section members to exchange information and ideas on a wide variety of topics related to clinical practice; currently, about 1000 members participate. The discussion group is also used to communicate urgent information on clinical specialty practice.

The Section has 17 specialty networks encompassing most areas of specialty pharmacy practice. The networks meet regularly at the MCM. Facilitators are appointed for each network by the Section's Chair; the network facilitators monitor developments and trends in their therapeutic area and advise ASHP and the Section's membership of these developments through the Section's e-mail discussion group, NewsLink, networking meetings, and other avenues. The facilitators serve ASHP and its members as therapeutic experts and contribute to ASHP advocacy and educational efforts.

Executive Committee

Susan Goodin, Chair (New Jersey)
 Ted L. Rice, Chair-elect (Pennsylvania)
 Rita K. Jew, Immediate Past Chair (California)
 James A. Trovato (Maryland)
 Michael D. Katz (Arizona)
 Philip J. Schneider, Board Liaison
 Leila R. Mohassel, Secretary

Resources for Clinical Specialists and Scientists. SCSS continues to enhance its resources for practitioners in different specialty areas of pharmacy practice. The Section is creating a "virtual journal club" on its Web site, which will enhance communication among and participation by members in different specialties and will facilitate informal discussion of therapeutic advances to encourage the practice of evidence-based medicine. In addition, the Section is creating a new column in *AJHP* for discussion of cutting-edge clinical issues. The column will address therapeutic controversies and provide recommendations on handling specific pharmacotherapeutic problems.

Advocacy. The Section continues to support ASHP activities in collaborative drug therapy management, compensation for pharmaceutical care services, recognition of pharmacists as health care providers, residency and fellowship training, and credentialing for pharmacists. In each of these areas, the Section leadership provides input and recommendations to the Board of Directors and ASHP staff. This past year, the Section continued to work on the issue of clinical privileging for pharmacists. The Qualified Provider Model Ad Hoc Committee, created in 2004, developed two templates for establishing credentialing and privileging for clinical services in health systems. A companion document describing a stepwise approach for implementing these processes is in development. Once completed, all of these documents will be posted on the Section Web site.

The Section has been heavily involved in emphasizing the evidence-based nature of pharmacy practice and has worked to incorporate evidence-based medicine concepts into the ASHP Health-System Pharmacy 2015 initiative. The Section will continue to stress that the responsibility for incorporating evidence-based therapeutic guidelines and medication use into patient care belongs to all pharmacists and pharmacy departments. This past year, the Section collaborated with the Council on Legal and Public Affairs in creating a position statement that the use of placebos in clinical practice is ethically acceptable only when patients give informed consent for placebos as a component of treatment. The policy was approved by the 2005 House of Delegates. To encourage health care facilities to formalize a process addressing this issue, sample policies and procedures have been posted on the Section Web site.

Specialty Practice and Credentialing. SCSS represents ASHP's continued commitment to meeting the needs of pharmacists in specialty practice settings and those working in the science of pharmacy practice. Members of the Section's Executive Committee believe that stakeholders from all pharmacy credentialing and certificate-granting programs should discuss an organized and rational model for pharmacist specialty practice. Discussions should address the utility of these credentials in privileging processes, and a plan should be developed for examining the processes for recertifying or maintaining specialty credentials to demonstrate continuing competence in the specialty.

Conclusion. The Section offers members a sense of identity within ASHP and an organizational home dedicated to meeting their specialized practice, scientific, and research needs. The Section will continue to grow and expand its activities largely because of the efforts of its enthusiastic members and dedicated leaders.

Committee on Programming

Erin R. Fox, Chair (Utah); Melinda Neuhauser, Vice Chair (Maryland); Curtis D. Collins (Michigan); Shannon H. Goldwater (Virginia); Karl Gumpfer (District of Columbia); Cherry W. Jackson (Georgia); Karla Miller (Tennessee); Mark A. Ninno (Florida); Michael Oszko (Kansas); Jean M. Scholtz (Pennsylvania)

Committee on Nominations

Rita K. Jew, Chair (California); Judy L. Curtis (Maryland); Jeffery A. Goad (California); Krista M. King (Texas); Edith A. Nutescu (Illinois); Susan J. Skledar (Pennsylvania); C. Wayne Weart (South Carolina)

Committee on Qualified Provider Models

Christene M. Jolowsky, Chair (Minnesota); Melissa Blair (South Carolina); Cynthia Brennan (Washington); Jannet M. Carmichael (Nevada); Karen E. Gorman (Colorado); Patricia C. Kienle (Pennsylvania); Philip T. Rodgers (North Carolina); Kim Thrasher (North Carolina); Elizabeth W. Young (North Carolina); Rita K. Jew, Executive Committee Liaison (California)

Network Facilitators

Anticoagulation: William Dager (California)
Cardiology: Michael Gulseth (Minnesota)
Critical Care: Mary Hess (South Carolina)
Drug Information/Pharmacoeconomics: Mark A. Ninno (Florida)
Emergency Medicine: Daniel P. Hays (New York)
Geriatrics: Michelle Fritsch (North Carolina)
Hematology/Oncology: Kamakshi Rao (North Carolina)
Immunology/Transplant: David I. Min (Iowa)
Infectious Diseases: Melinda M. Neuhauser (Maryland)
Investigational Drugs/Clinical Research: Bobby G. Bryant (Ohio)
Nutrition Support: Caitlin S. Curtis (Wisconsin)
Pain Management: Suzanne A. Nesbit (Maryland)
Pediatrics/Obstetrics–Gynecology/Neonatal: Anita Siu (New Jersey)
Pharmacokinetics: Vincent H. Tam (Texas)
Primary Care/Pharmacotherapy: Alan J. Zillich (Indiana)
Psychopharmacy/Neurology: Sheila R. Botts (Florida)
Surgery/Anesthesiology: Eric L. Chernin (Florida)