

Message from the Chair

May 2009



Dear Colleagues:

Set the vision..... Go the course..... Follow your bubbles.....

The challenges facing health-system pharmacy in these turbulent economic times are numerous. We can be successful during these turbulent times and the years ahead if we establish and maintain the appropriate vision and course of action for health-system pharmacy.

Set the vision. The vision for health-system pharmacy has been discussed and debated for many years. We must not delay any longer to set the vision. The primary component of the vision must be the pharmacist's cognitive management of the therapeutic aspects medication use via direct pharmacist involvement in the multidisciplinary care environment. Secondary components of the vision must address the effective management of logistical support structures for the efficient purchasing, preparation and distribution of medications. An accepted common vision is the platform from which we will go the course.

Go the course. We must navigate the course of managing the therapeutic and logistical components of medication use via the most direct path. As we go the course we will encounter numerous challenges and obstacles. We need to discretely identify the challenges and obstacles within the profession. The tactics used to address the challenges and obstacles need to be in sync with the vision. There are also challenges and obstacles external to the profession. Collaboration with healthcare executives, patient care providers, regulatory and accreditation agencies, and patient safety groups is essential to address the external challenges and obstacles as well to garner their advocacy as we go the course to achieve the vision.

Follow your bubbles. Health care will always be dynamic and challenging. There will be times of confusion and limited information as to what approach to take to address a particular situation.

Scuba diving students are taught that should they become confused or disoriented in unfamiliar environments under water they can find their way to the surface and safety by following their bubbles (the air they exhale while under water). The bubbles always go towards the surface and provide the scuba diver a predictable point of reference.

Unfortunately, above the water there are no bubbles to follow as a consistent point of reference when clarification in a difficult situation is needed. Our individual personal value system is the substitute for the bubbles. Our personal value system must be well founded and unwavering. It must be present in clear and unclear environments. It must be dependable when unclear challenges and difficult obstacles are encountered. It assists us on our course to achieve the vision.

The Section of Pharmacy Practice Managers through its resources, educational offerings and networking opportunities provides a platform to set a common vision for health-system pharmacists. Section resources and education offerings assist members on their course to achieve the vision. Members' personal value systems can be validated through Section networking opportunities with peers.

The challenges facing health-system pharmacy in these turbulent economic times are numerous. Together we will successfully meet the challenges via a common vision and a well navigated course of action.

Thank you for your membership, support, and involvement in the Section of Pharmacy Practice Managers.

Sincerely,

James R. Rinehart, R.Ph., M.S., FASHP
Chair, Section of Pharmacy Practice Managers