

## Member Spotlight

**Melinda M. Neuhauser, Pharm.D.**  
**Clinical Pharmacy Specialist, Infectious Diseases**  
**Member Since: June 1996**  
**Focus: Infectious Diseases**

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### Her Story



**Melinda M. Neuhauser, Pharm.D.**, is a clinical pharmacy specialist for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Pharmacy Benefit Management Strategic Healthcare Group in Hines, IL. She received her Doctor of Pharmacy from the University of Minnesota and completed an infectious diseases specialty residency at Detroit Receiving Hospital and University Health Center. She then completed a fellowship in infectious diseases at University of Illinois at Chicago. Prior to joining the VA, Dr. Neuhauser held a clinical faculty position at the University of Houston, College of Pharmacy with a practice site at UT M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. She then moved to Washington, D.C. and was employed at the National Institutes of Health, Clinical Center Pharmacy Department as a clinical pharmacy specialist in infectious diseases. She is currently chair for ASHP Clinical Specialists and Scientists Program Committee and mentor for the ASHP Virtual Mentoring Exchange. In addition, she serves as Treasurer/Secretary for the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP) and is a member of ACCP Taskforce on Inter-Professional Education.

### The Road to Clinical Practice and Research

After graduating with her Doctor of Pharmacy, she completed three years of post-doctoral training in infectious diseases. She received clinical training by completing a one-year ASHP accredited infectious diseases specialty residency at Detroit Receiving Hospital and then focused on research during a 2 year fellowship at University of Illinois at Chicago. She continued to build and expand upon her infectious diseases foundation by pursuing specialty positions in infectious diseases.

### Current Pharmacy Practice

Currently, Melinda is employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Pharmacy Benefit Management Strategic Healthcare Group (PBM-SHG). The mission of the PBM-SHG is "to improve the health status of veterans by encouraging the appropriate use of medications in a comprehensive medical care setting." As a clinical pharmacist working for the PBM-SHG, her role is to critically evaluate new molecular entities for the national VA formulary, conduct drug class reviews, and provide recommendations for pharmacologic management and criteria for use. Consistent with her training, her focus is on infectious diseases related drugs and disease states.

### Advice

"If you have a passion for specialty area of pharmacy, I would highly recommend pursuing post-doctoral residency and/or fellowship training in that specialty. I was fortunate to realize my passion for infectious diseases during pharmacy school. As a result, I had the opportunity to receive training at different institutions, which I believe broadened my knowledge and perspectives. I enjoyed learning clinical practices that varied based upon patient populations, geography, institutions, etc," said Melinda.

### The Value of ASHP Membership

Melinda became a member of ASHP as a 4th year pharmacy student at the University of Minnesota. Much of her early involvement with ASHP was attending the Clinical Midyear Meetings and utilizing the resources geared towards residencies, fellowships and career placement (i.e. residency showcase and Personnel Placement Center (PPS)). She also utilized PPS to interview potential residency candidates when she became coordinator of the infectious diseases specialty residency program at the University of Houston and UT MD Anderson Cancer Center. She also attended the ASHP Preceptors Conference to broaden her knowledge of the RLS learning system.

"My involvement in ASHP has greatly expanded from my early experiences with residency showcases and PPS. I enjoy attending the Midyear Clinical Meeting to attend sessions and network with colleagues. Additionally, I have been able to contribute to the programming of the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meetings by becoming a member and now Chair of the Program Committee for the Clinical Specialists and Scientists. At Midyear, I have attended and facilitated the Infectious Diseases Networking Session, a forum that encourages the exchange of practice experience between clinicians. At work, I receive the NewsLink from ASHP and receiving practice perspectives from the Clinical Specialists and Scientists listserver," said Melinda.

### **Other Opportunities for Infectious Diseases Pharmacists**

Infectious diseases pharmacists may also belong to the Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists (SIDP). This organization that was formed in 1990 for health care professionals dedicated to promoting the appropriate use of antimicrobial agents. The Society has supported their mission through educational efforts, sponsored research and a variety of post-graduate training programs. There are currently over 400 members of SIDP. Members have an opportunity to meet other members face to face at the SIDP Annual Meeting, which is traditionally held the day before ICAAC. Members also have the opportunity to work together on SIDP committees and/or taskforces. SIDP collaborates with ASHP and other health care organizations. Specifically, SIDP and ASHP have co-sponsored educational sessions at ASHP Meetings and created consensus guidelines such as the Vancomycin Monitoring Consensus Guidelines that should be published in the near future. "Above all, get involved and get active" says Melinda, "find your niche and take the time to further your profession. The effort you put into it will pay you back many fold in terms of professional satisfaction, interactions with new colleagues, and enjoyment."

For more information contact Melinda Neuhauser. Just login to utilize the [Clinical Specialists and Scientists' Online Directory](#).