

## Member Spotlight

**Carole Small Russell, MHSA, R.Ph.**  
**Manager, Inpatient Pharmacy Services**  
**Medical University Hospital Authority**  
**Member Since: October 1977**  
**Focus: Pharmacy Practice Management**

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### Her Story



**Carole Small Russell, MHSA, R.Ph.** is a graduate of the Medical University of SC College of Pharmacy (BS Pharm), and the Medical University of SC College of Health Professions (MHSA). She is currently a Pharmacy Manager for Inpatient Operations at Medical University of SC Hospital Authority, and has been in a management role for 25 years. Carole is responsible for the management of human and financial resources for pharmacy operations for 500 adult inpatient beds. She is also responsible for other services including operating room satellites and automated dispensing machine system. Additionally, Carole has been active in the ASHP Section of Pharmacy Practice Managers and in the South Carolina Society of Health-System Pharmacists (SCSHP), where she has held various positions including President, Continuing Education Chair, and SCSHP Delegate to ASHP.

### The Facility

Carole works at the Medical University of SC Hospital Authority (MUHA), which is affiliated with the SC College of Pharmacy in Charleston, SC. MUHA is a 701 bed academic medical center with 183 FTEs in the Department of Pharmacy Services.

### Pharmacy Department Projects

While not unique, Carole explains that they are in the middle of a year plan to implement a new pharmacy information system, BCMA, and CPOE while opening a new cardiovascular/GI medicine facility with 150 beds. "Our coastal location also requires us to stay focused on emergency preparedness, which is a challenge with the technology and growth we are experiencing. Fortunately, pharmacy is very much 'at the table' in emergency and disaster planning not only for our facility but the region. As the regional trauma center, we play a large role in coordination of pharmacy regional response plans," said Russell.

### Challenges

With growth in facilities, locations, and technology one of the biggest challenges is leadership resources. Training and staff development of our new practitioners requires good leadership and often large scale implementations of technology or new facilities capture our attention from development of our most valuable resource, our staff. Some lessons learned include the necessity to focus attention on staff and their needs, which can pay off in the long run. Additionally, turnover, staffing shortages, and lack of training and experience can devastate an organization.

### What the Future Holds

Carole believes that further expansion of pharmacy roles for the professional and technical staff is imminent with CPOE and technology development.

### The Rewards

Carole is rewarded by working with both new and experienced practitioners in student and staff roles. She is constantly impressed and motivated by their passion for quality patient care. "Working with my colleagues in the area on regional emergency preparedness has given me the opportunity to serve my community. My long time affiliation with professional organizations has given me the opportunity to serve the profession, share and exchange knowledge, and retain enthusiasm for my career," said Russell.

### **Advice**

Pursuing formal management training is helpful in obtaining the knowledge base needed for the financial and organizational management skills needed. Leadership training either through your organization or with external programs and pursuing any opportunity for leadership (school or community organizations, committee chair or lead member for a project in your department, volunteering for short term projects) will provide a glimpse of what this type of practice might be. Professional organizations can provide a lot of guidance also.

### **The Value of ASHP Membership**

"I joined ASHP as a new hospital pharmacy practitioner to learn more about the profession and gain skills. As I moved into management roles, I found much support as a new manager with the ASHP resources, policy statements, white papers and technical assistance bulletins. The most important resource was the access to an incredible number of role models and mentors within the organization that helped shape my career. Now I rely on the resources of the Sections and list servers which are invaluable in my day to day practice," said Russell.