



## **ASHP Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee Recommendations\* A Call for Comments**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this discussion paper is to encourage comments on the preliminary recommendations of the ASHP Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee. The ASHP Board of Directors convened a Steering Committee of women and men pharmacy leaders to provide recommendations to support women in achieving pharmacy leadership skills and roles at every level and practice setting. ASHP is committed to being responsive to the needs and changing dynamics of the pharmacy work force. Committee members represent a diverse group of pharmacy leaders from a variety of ages, practice settings and positions, and represent a wide range of career stages.

### **Purpose and Rationale for the Steering Committee**

The profession of pharmacy is rapidly evolving, and with it the needs of ASHP members are transforming. This includes the pharmacy workforce. Today, more than half of actively practicing pharmacists are female, and the mean Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for men and women is equal. In addition, over the last 20 years, pharmacy school enrollment of women has increased, representing 61.4% of all first professional degree students, and 49.3% of all full-time graduate pharmacy students. Women are also graduating from pharmacy school at higher rates, and represent more than half of all practicing pharmacists. In contrast, over the last 20 years, men are retiring at a much faster rate than women. This has led to a greater percentage of women practicing in the profession.

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According to a Pew Research Center survey on women and leadership, key leadership traits such as intelligence and capacity for innovation are indistinguishable from men and women. As a whole, the pipeline for female leaders in pharmacy is widening. Women have also made inroads into leadership positions in recent decades. Even so, while the data shows that women represent the majority of pharmacists practicing today; however, they still occupy far too few leadership positions in the pharmacy profession, and in healthcare at large, particularly at senior leadership levels in proportion to the demographics. There are noticeable developments in the career paths of women, with fewer women populating the upward leadership path, despite being the demographic majority. The benefits of a diverse workforce are vast, and include different perspectives and experiences that ultimately contribute to better decision-making and a more productive and robust workplace.

The Steering Committee's intent is not focus on an issue of parity but instead focus on the issue as a business opportunity for the profession. The committee desires to present solutions to analyzing what is right with organizations and leaders that facilitate women for successful leadership careers and tap into the resulting competitive edge, and to offer options for consideration by individuals, leaders seeking to develop talent and for organizations to examine, understand and create change to identify and eliminate barriers women face uniquely in the leadership journey.

Throughout its history, ASHP periodically has made several significant organizational adjustments in response to changes or anticipated changes in its environment. The current work by the Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee is another step in this tradition of self-assessment. In addressing this workforce change, the Steering Committee affirms the overarching principle that fair and equitable leadership opportunities should be based on merit and qualifications, and provided to all pharmacists—women and men. The goal of the Steering Committee is to assist ASHP in identifying and bridging leadership gaps within pharmacy practice, and advancing professional development opportunities for all pharmacists. The Steering Committee will conclude its work in August 2016.

### Issues for Women Pharmacy Leaders

Much as been written in business literature about the benefits of diversity in the workplace. Facilitating women leadership is a business issue as much as a gender diversity issue. As an example, the workforce may not have been trained to recognize gender differences (such as different communications styles or career cycles) and it is important to become skilled in managing these differences that may contribute to better performance, innovation and outcomes. Business literature has demonstrated a positive correlation with gender balanced leadership teams and key performance indicators such as employee engagement, financial outcomes, retention, and customer satisfaction. Therefore, leadership teams with more gender balance produce better results.

There are a variety of issues that need to be addressed related to the leadership gender and demographic changes of the profession including succession planning and development of programs for emerging women leaders, effective recruitment and retention, merit-based systems, relationship building, gender style differences and leadership development needs, among others.

The need for formalized sponsorships is a leadership challenge for aspiring women pharmacy leaders. Sponsorship is a formal process between the sponsor and protégé that serves to identify, develop and support the growth of high-potential leadership. Sponsorship, which should not be mistaken for mentorship, is a continuous relationship between the sponsor and protégé that often includes endorsement from the sponsor of the protégé and invested assistance from the sponsor in helping to plan and execute the protégé's professional advancement throughout his/her career. Some ways that sponsors can help to promote a protégé are by providing access to professional networks, helping to highlight a protégé's achievements to executive leadership, and recommending a protégé for key promotions or assignments.

Not only is sponsorship beneficial to the protégé, but also to the sponsor and employer. First, sponsorship serves to advance a sponsor's career by helping to enhance their own leadership skills and establish a reputation as a quality leader who is invested in talent management. It also helps to create a "pay it forward" mentality that can perpetuate throughout the organization. Second, sponsorship helps employers by promoting high-performance employees. It supports the enhancement of employee engagement and talent development and decreases employee turnover. Pharmacy leaders should be provided with the workforce tools and training necessary to embrace sponsorships as a component of their professional role and responsibility.

Formalized sponsorships and/or other professional development programs should ideally begin at the employer-level and be incorporated into pharmacy school curricula. This will help to establish a foundation for pharmacy students and provide early exposure and access to career opportunities. It may also help to enhance the importance of soft skills needed for professional success (i.e. emotional intelligence, communication, teamwork/collaboration, adaptability, critical observation, and conflict resolution).

ACPE's revised 2016 Standard reaffirms the need for soft skills and ensures that pharmacy graduates are 'practice-ready' and 'team-ready' to work as healthcare providers and on interprofessional healthcare teams. Along with foundational knowledge (Standard 1) and essentials for practice and care (Standard 2), ACPE also identifies approaches to practice and care (Standard 3), such as problem-solving and cultural sensitivity and personal and professional development skills (Standard 4), such as self-awareness and professionalism as essential skills, abilities and behaviors all pharmacy graduates need to successfully contribute to the contemporary practice of pharmacy.

ASHP has sought feedback through the Steering Committee and through other areas to identify the potential needs of emerging women leaders. Concepts, ideas and preliminary recommendations were harvested and recorded from the small group discussions, larger formalized networking sessions at ASHP national meetings, focus groups, and online communities.

The following are examples of issues that members identified that warrant further discussion, consideration and development to evaluate potential recommendations for ASHP follow-up and introduction of programmatic offerings:

- Supporting women leader evolution
- Building Mentor-Coach-Sponsor programs and skills
- Providing information on successful life-career integration
- Educating both men and women on gender leadership strengths and differences
- Supporting women's leadership development including:
  - Creation of a personal and professional mission/vision and values
  - Building of self-confidence
  - Communication skills/strategies
- Brokerage mechanism(s) for collecting and sharing successes, stories and example scenarios of successful women leaders
- Providing skills-building for personal branding, influence, negotiation and marketing skills
- Developing formalized programs for career development strategies, and identifying and evaluating career opportunities
- Recognizing, understanding and eliminating gender bias in workplace culture
- Highlighting different (e.g. clinical vs. administrative) career paths/tracks for women to pursue
- Reviewing other healthcare professions' strategies for promoting women in leadership such as nursing, medicine, etc.

ASHP has committed to creating an environment for leadership development of the new generation of women pharmacy leaders. The Steering Committee endeavors to recommend the best ways that ASHP can be responsive to the needs of its members and will continue to be a leader in preparing members for the future.

### **Next Steps**

The Steering Committee has developed draft Principles and Recommendations for feedback from all ASHP members. The Committee is interested in hearing views about these recommendations and how to further improve or refine its work prior to making final recommendations to the ASHP Board of Directors.

## Principles Supporting the Recommendations to ASHP

1. Leadership development is a core function of ASHP and the ASHP Research and Education Foundation and is of strategic importance to the Society and its members.
2. Gender balanced leadership teams and the prevalence of women in leadership positions correlate with improved performance indicators. Therefore facilitating women leaders is a business issue versus a gender issue. Both men and women stand to benefit from the discussion and enhanced presence of women in leadership.
3. ASHP as a membership society is in a unique position to facilitate and expedite the development of women leaders.
4. Engender a high level of member involvement and commitment to support emerging women leaders.
5. Key factors create positive career opportunities (career inflection points) that are pivotal to leadership advancement and success. Examples of career inflection points include factors such as education and training (type of additional degrees), experience (clinical/administrative), career management (risk taking), family (support for/by partner), networking (professional organizations, women's groups), mentorship and sponsorship. These inflection points should be communicated and supported by ASHP.
6. ASHP is committed to supporting leadership roles for women in clinical, administrative, academic, and all job functions.

## Recommendations to ASHP:

1. Allocate resources strategically to create and sustain specific ASHP services including meetings and education, skills building programs, networking forums to support career development strategies and other resources.
2. Work-life integration is an ongoing issue for all pharmacy professionals (men and women). Identify and share strategies for successful work-life integration with members.
3. Highlight the differences between role models, mentors, coaches and sponsors and foster the development of these relationships among its members. Specifically, the concept of sponsorship should be introduced and nurtured between early female careerists and successful women leaders.
4. Develop a strategy to collect baseline and ongoing metrics regarding women in leadership positions within the pharmacy profession. Data exists within the general workforce and within healthcare but not within the pharmacy profession.
5. Proactively collect and share stories, case studies and scenarios of how women have addressed gender, workplace, work-life integration, and leadership challenges.
6. Assess volunteer, meeting, and governance policies and practices to support successful engagement and participation among ASHP members.

7. Share successful pharmacy employer policies and practices that reflect supportive work environments.
8. Study pharmacy-specific career inflection points including individual, organizational and societal factors and promote these leverage points.
9. Cultivate career aspirations of early careerists.
10. Facilitate leadership development throughout all functional roles (e.g. clinical, administrative and academic among others).
11. Actively recruit women into its elected and appointed leadership and support their advancements by recognizing their volunteer contributions and achievements.
12. Support ASHP state affiliates and colleges of pharmacy in disseminating and supporting the Women in Pharmacy Leadership recommendations at the school, local, and state level.

#### **Recommendations to Those Seeking Leadership Roles:**

1. Develop a strategic career plan focused on personal skill development, and meet with senior leaders to voice aspirations.
2. Seek applicable education and training (e.g. advanced degrees, residency training, skills based leadership training) to support career trajectory.
3. Recognize that one's career progression is a journey and that each transition entails a new level of commitment and dedication to work-life integration
4. Expand a network of seasoned practitioners both male and female.
5. Identify mentors and sponsors and nurture productive relationships.
6. Be assertive in negotiating, designing, and applying work models that meet the needs of employers as well as individual professional and personal needs for work-personal life balance.

#### **Recommendations to Current Pharmacy Leaders:**

1. For individuals who are in the position of mentoring and sponsoring others, actively identify mentees and nurture those who would benefit from sponsorship, working together to create a personal development plan.
2. Promote key factors that create positive career changes such as advanced degrees and residency training (career inflection points) among mentees.
3. Encourage aspiring leaders to seek and take on visible, important and complex roles and projects.
4. Make introductions of aspiring leaders with other influential leaders.
5. Provide specialized coaching and give feedback.
6. Support the expansion of professional networks of emerging leaders.
7. Share profiles, stories and recommendations of successful female pharmacy leaders with others.

### Recommendations to Employer Organizations/Pharmacy Departments:

1. Cultivate career aspirations of female early careerists.
2. Encourage early careerists to proactively manage career plans.
3. Develop mentoring, coaching, and sponsorship programs.
4. Promote active assumption of sponsorship activities to advance aspiring leaders.
5. Identify challenges that prevent aspiring women leaders from pursuing advanced career goals.
6. Create and expand residency programs and other skills-based formal education and training programs, including leadership training, that have been shown to be instrumental in the career success.
7. Examine and consider implementation of organizational policies to provide support to working professionals including flexible hours, job sharing, etc.
8. Offer and/or support educational, training programs and personal development opportunities to build success skills of female careerists

### Suggested Readings:

Women in pharmacy leadership. ASHP.

<http://www.ashp.org/menu/PracticePolicy/ResourceCenters/Leadership/Women-in-Pharmacy-Leadership>

Abramowitz P. (2015). Women in pharmacy leadership. <http://connect.ashp.org/blogs/paul-abramowitz/2015/10/12/women-in-pharmacy-leadership?ssopc=1>

ASHP steering committee to explore impact of women in the pharmacy workforce. ASHP. <http://www.ashp.org/menu/AboutUs/ForPress/PressReleases/PressRelease.aspx?id=876>

Report of the ASHP Task Force on Pharmacy's Changing Demographics. ASHP. <http://www.aacp.org/resources/research/pharmacyworkforcecenter/Documents/ASHPTaskForcePharmacysChangingDems2007.pdf>

Academic pharmacy's vital statistics. AACP. <http://www.aacp.org/about/Pages/Vitalstats.aspx>

Gardner SF, Stowe CD. 2006. The impact of a gender shift on a profession: Women in pharmacy. Forum on Public Policy. <http://forumonpublicpolicy.com/archive07/gardner.pharmacy.pdf>

Hauser MC. Leveraging women's leadership talent in healthcare. (Sept/Oct 2014). *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 59(5); 318-322.

Barreto M, Ryan MK, Schmitt MT. (2009). Introduction: Is the glass ceiling still relevant in the 21st century? In M. Barreto, M. K. Ryan, & M. T. Schmitt (Eds.), *The glass ceiling in the 21st century* (pp. 153-169). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Ryan MK, Haslam S. (2005). The glass cliff: Evidence that women are over-represented in precarious leadership positions. *British Journal of Management*, 16(2), 81-90.

Ibarra H, Carter NM, Silva C. (2010). Why men still get more promotions than women: Your high-potential females need more than just well-meaning mentors. *Harvard Business Review*, September, 80-85.

Catalyst study shows sponsorship is key to women's success. Catalyst.

<http://qww.catalyst.org/media/catalyst-study-shows-sponsorship-key-women%E2%80%99s-success>

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## Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. If women comprise the majority of licensed pharmacists, why is the initiative focused on women especially as there seems to be many women leaders in the pharmacy profession? Is there a need to focus on facilitating women leaders?

The gender shift that has occurred with the profession of pharmacy has sparked debate regarding the potential impact that this might have on the workforce. The US workforce, including the pharmacy profession, has many successful women in leadership positions which should be celebrated. However, women are still underrepresented in significant leadership positions.

- 76% of healthcare workforce are women (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2011)
- 18% of hospital CEOs are women (American Hospital Association, 2010)
- 71% of mid-level leadership positions are women (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 2011)
- 24% of top executives are women (American Hospital Association, 2010)
- 12% of women executives are CEOs (American College of Healthcare Executives, 2006)

The Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee recommends that ASHP develop a strategy to establish and maintain metrics regarding women in leadership positions within the pharmacy profession. To date, the demographics of women that are in leadership positions such as multihospital system Chief Pharmacy Officers, Deans of Colleges and Schools of Pharmacy, or Directors of Pharmacy as some examples, suggest that fewer women populate the upward leadership path.

### 2. Should the facilitation of leadership be gender neutral?

While leadership development needs addressed in the discussion paper can be attributed to both men and women, the belief is that talented women frequently need encouragement to pursue leadership positions and overcome barriers that may apply uniquely to women in the workforce. These barriers may be gender role ideologies driven by society or gender differences in skills and leadership strengths.

The purpose of the Women in Pharmacy Leadership Steering Committee is not about simply facilitating women, but more about encouraging women to pursue leadership roles. Doing so increases the talent pool from which the profession draws current and future leadership.

Although women have long been known to seek balance between work and their personal lives and base their career choices on family responsibilities, men are increasingly seeking the same balance. However, in the most recent 2014 National Pharmacy Workforce Study, it was found that males had higher levels of job satisfaction and experienced a higher level of control in the work environment than females. Compared to males, females had a higher level of career commitment, comparable work-home conflict and organizational commitment than males, but also experienced lower levels of control in the work environment than males.

Pharmacy environments should be challenged to facilitate leadership development by encouraging women to consider leadership roles, particularly recognizing the changing desires that women may have as their responsibilities evolve throughout their careers.

The committee is focused on providing recommendations that might positively affect the influx of female pharmacists. Rethinking traditional models and infusing change through this type of discussion can allow this gender shift to have positive implications on job satisfaction, advancement of the profession, and improvements in patient care.

While various models have been put forth for managing diversity including gender diversity in a work setting, the committee is not recommending a model where women in pharmacy are differentiated. Rather, the committee seeks facilitation of a discussion and a culture that values and capitalizes on women's unique perspectives and differences influenced by their experiences that assists the workplace to plan for future challenges and cultivate future leaders.

### **3. Are the challenges facing future leaders more generational based vs. gender based?**

While studying generational differences has not been the focus on the committee, factors among different generations may also influence career decisions and leadership roles. However, gender differences have been shown to impact career advancement and the committee is focused on making recommendations around this issue. Generational issues may be one that is a focus in the future.

### **4. Is the goal or focus of this committee to promote women primarily to Chief Pharmacy Officers or other administrative positions vs. leadership in other career paths?**

The goal of the committee is to provide support for those seeking any leadership position. These include positions that are different than Chief Pharmacy Officer or other administrative positions. The committee recognizes that there are diverse career paths such as in clinical leadership that may influence the choice of what type of education and training one pursues, what networking groups individuals seek, and what support from mentors and sponsors are needed. The committee recommends that these diverse

career inflection points be communicated and supported by ASHP to support women in many types of leadership roles.

**5. What are some examples of positive outcomes that may come of the recommendations?**

The committee is asking that ASHP consider the development of a variety of different offerings to meet the intent of the recommendations. New programs, services, education, and networking opportunities are some examples. Specific recommendations include the provision of ongoing ways for ASHP to collecting and sharing successes, stories and example scenarios of successful women leaders, encouraging mentor-coach-and sponsor programs and skills, educating women and men on gender leadership strengths and differences, developing programs for career development strategies and highlighting different career paths for aspiring leaders to pursue, and potentially collaborating with other health care professions on like-interests in this area.

###