

PSW Educational Conference 2021: Working Together While Apart

by Brianna Groen, 2022 PharmD Candidate

Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin (PSW) members continued to embody the PSW mission of working together while apart, as they gathered virtually for the annual PSW Educational Conference in April of this year. PSW held the conference virtually for the second year due to continued concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Although unable to gather in person, 306 pharmacists, residents, technicians, and student pharmacists from around the state were able to engage in a variety of content that included live programming, On-demand content, and virtual networking sessions. Organizers and attendees used the PSW app and a virtual platform to produce and view conference programming. Attendees were able to use their smartphones, tablets, laptops, or desktop devices to engage in conference programming.

The Wisconsin Pharmacy Residency Conference (WPRC) was held concurrently with this year's Educational Conference once again. Both conferences had full agendas for the two days of programming, on April 14 and April 15. During the WPRC, residents had the opportunity to deliver a virtual platform presentation that was incorporated into the conference programming. There were 130 resident presentations given during 43 sessions via Zoom. Conference attendees had the opportunity to send feedback to resident presenters via the PSW app. Regarding the virtual WPRC, Dr. Sarah Sorum, Executive Vice President and PSW CEO, shares, "It is always so energizing to see residents from across the state share their year-long residency project work with colleagues."

Attendees of the PSW Educational Conference had access to 10 on-demand presentations, in addition to live programming. These presentations included a wide variety of topics, ranging from artificial intelligence to updates on gout therapeutics. The PSW Educational

Conference live sessions, on-demand content, and WPRC materials all provided attendees with an opportunity to claim continuing education (CE) hours. In total, 21 hours of CE were available for pharmacists, and 15 hours of CE were available for pharmacy technicians; attendees had 60 days to claim CE from the live sessions. As with previous virtual conferences, attendees are able to access the content from this year's Educational Conference and claim CE from on-demand content within the next three years.

The Educational Conference began with the first live session, "Pharmacists Leading the Way: Public Health and Pandemic Response," led by Dean Coppola and Scott Giberson. Dean Coppola is the Client Executive of Public Health Disaster Management and COVID-19 Testing and Vaccinations at AMI Expeditionary Healthcare, and Scott Giberson is the Executive Director of Corporate Affairs at AMI Expeditionary Healthcare. This session highlighted the important role pharmacists have as leaders in public health, and how pharmacists have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with an emphasis on the important role pharmacists play in mass vaccination efforts.

The second live session continued to discuss the role of the pharmacist during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pharmacists have been part of the framework for the distribution of COVID-19 therapeutics and vaccines. During this session, "Building an Ethical Framework for Managing Scarcity Resources," Alyson Capp, Paul Kelleher, Mo Kharbat, and Liz Laubach explored the role of the state's Disaster Medical Advisory Subcommittee for Therapeutics, and how different health systems managed the distribution of COVID-19 therapeutics and vaccines.

Following these two live sessions, conference programming included two exhibit theaters over the lunch hour, with exhibits from AstraZeneca and DocStation.

An exhibit session followed the exhibit theater presentations and was hosted using the LecturePanda exhibit platform. Conference attendees were able to log in to the exhibit hall and connect with industry sponsors in virtual meeting rooms.

The virtual poster session was held following the exhibit session. The PSW poster session included 98 posters that featured pharmacy research topics, including clinical and specialty pharmacy practice; ambulatory and community pharmacy practice; novel topics in pharmacy; informatics and technology; and education and research. Poster presenters and attendees were invited to join a Zoom session with breakout rooms. Presenters then took turns presenting their posters and answering questions from attendees. This was a unique opportunity for student pharmacists, residents, and pharmacists to refine their presentation skills while sharing how their research is impacting future directions of pharmacy practice.

During the evening of the first day of the conference, attendees had the opportunity to choose from four different networking sessions. These networking sessions included Ambulatory Care Networking; Building Leadership Skills During a Pandemic; Incorporating the Values of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Practice; and the Agenda-Free Happy Hour.

On the second day of the conference, early risers were able to get energized prior to the first live session by attending the Smart Start with PSW yoga session or sharing on the PSW app other ways they were starting their morning. After an invigorating start to the day, attendees joined the first live session, "Structural Racism and Health: Conceptual Framework, Strategies and Recommended Actions." Leonard Egede, a general internist and health services researcher, and Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin, discussed



2021 PSW Virtual Educational Conference

Wednesday - Thursday
April 14 - 15, 2021

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the historical basis for structural racism, definitions, and policies that perpetuate structural racism. Dr. Egede also discussed how structural racism impacts health outcomes, and he provided strategies for changing the negative effects that structural racism has on health outcomes.

The next live session was led by Jessica Bonham-Werling and Kate Rotzenberg. Jessica Bonham-Werling is the Director of the Neighborhood Health Partnerships Program and the Associate Director of Research Operations at the Health Innovation Program within the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Kate Rotzenberg is an Associate Faculty Associate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy. This session educated attendees about the sources of health data for the Neighborhood Health Partnerships Program, and how that data can be obtained. The presenters also identified causes of varied health outcomes in neighborhoods that are adjacent, and proposed how neighborhood health data could be applied in one's own practice setting.

Nicole Schreiner, Vice President and Co-Owner of Streu's Pharmacy, presented during the third live session on the second day of the conference. Dr. Schreiner defined direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees, their origin, and how DIR fees affect pharmacy business. In this session, she also explained why some DIR fees are different from other Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) DIR fees.

There were two exhibit theaters over the lunch hour on the second day, hosted by Janssen and Kit Pharma. Following the exhibit theaters, pharmacists and researchers presented on safe opioid use in

Wisconsin. The session, "Home Grown Research: Supporting Safe Opioid Use in Rural Wisconsin," was led by James Ford, Kevin Look, Sarah Pagenkopf, Tyler Prickette, and Kate Rotzenberg. During this session, they described the rationale for safe opioid use efforts in rural Wisconsin, current pharmacy-led research projects, and the importance of engagement from stakeholders in designing opioid interventions.

To help pharmacists navigate the challenge of medication adherence during the pandemic, Julia Barnes, Julie Cable, Ellen Maxwell, Erin McCreary, Philip Nguyen, Eileen Romasanta, Jen Slaughter, and Sarah Uluc led a session that explained the importance of promoting medication adherence in the pharmacy workplace, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their session, "Let's Chat: Navigating Medication Adherence in the COVID-19 Pandemic," outlined strategies to improve access to medications and medication adherence by understanding determinants of health and the various resources needed to manage adherence programs.

The final live session of the conference summarized the benefits and barriers of telehealth. The use of telehealth technology has expanded for most pharmacists during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this session, Matthew Huppert, Catherine Kuecker, Mackenzie McCauley, and Helene McDowell explained how telehealth can be incorporated into the workflow differently, depending on the pharmacy setting.

It was exciting to see how PSW continues to adapt and change conference delivery to rise above the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. PSW provided another successful

Educational Conference that facilitated the delivery of new and stimulating information. Although held virtually, the conference was enhanced by the multitude of opportunities for attendees to learn about and discuss pharmacy practice advancements. Regarding this year's Educational Conference, Dr. Sarah Sorum, Executive Vice President, and PSW CEO, says, "As we evolve as an organization to meet this moment, building community and connecting members have been identified by the PSW Board of Directors as a strategic priority. Leveraging technology and providing forums, even if they are virtual, to interact with colleagues is critical."

Brianna Groen is a 4th Year Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy in Madison, WI.