



Educational Conference Recap



CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Blazing a Trail

2023 PSW Educational Conference Recap

by Amanda Egbert, 2024 PharmD Candidate

Over 350 pharmacists, pharmacy residents, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians attended the 2023 Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin's (PSW) Educational Conference in April. The statewide event took place over two days at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison, Wis. This year's educational conference focused on fostering change and engaging in storytelling through the theme, "Champions of Change: Blazing a Trail."

The 2023 Wisconsin Pharmacy Residency Conference (WPRC) was held concurrently with the PSW Educational Conference. There were 121 platform presentations given by 81 pharmacy residents during both days of the conference. Presentations were followed by questions from the audience and formal feedback from evaluators. Topics ranged from appropriate prescribing of peri-operative antibiotics and considering pharmacogenomics for the use of opioid analgesics to evaluating medication adherence in patients with cystic fibrosis and pharmacist-led aspirin deprescribing processes in the ambulatory care setting.

In addition to the WPRC, poster sessions took place over the lunch hour during both days of the conference. A total of 88 posters were lined up throughout the Community Terrace where pharmacists and student pharmacists proudly presented

their research from the past year. Interested attendees had the opportunity to walk around, ask questions, and learn about the new and important work being done by professionals in pharmacy practice.

Attendees of the conference were encouraged to use the PSW app to create their own personalized schedule, connect with other conference-goers, share photos and reflections on the activity wall, and view available virtual content from the event. Another fun opportunity was the event game, where attendees could earn points by completing challenges, such as "Attend the La Jolla Exhibit Theater," "Meet a PSW Board Member at the Poster Session," and "Share Your Story" at the Grand Terrace video booth.

Day One Details

Steve Bench, founder of Generational Consulting, LLC, jumpstarted the conference by leading the first general session, "Overcoming Generational Differences." Bench, also known as "The Millennial Guy," discussed each of the five generations in the workforce and the traits and stereotypes known to define them. He humorously touched on each generation's motto, talents, and value in the workplace and highlighted that "we are all products of the culture that raised us." Bench explained that putting effort into understanding generational differences can build stronger relationships, improve the culture at work,

and increase job satisfaction for all team members.

Following a short networking break, Kari Trapskin, Danielle Womack, and Pamela Appleby led the second general session, "The Pathway Onward: Provider Status Progression and Advancement." Trapskin and Womack introduced the PSW Provider Status Implementation Guide and its anticipated contents as provider status for pharmacists begins to take shape. They continued on to address the question, "What should be done now?" by recommending that pharmacists obtain their National Provider Identifier (NPI), evaluate current services offered, ensure individual liability insurance, and begin discussions with partner physicians about collaborative practice agreements (CPAs). Trapskin and Womack rounded out their portion of the presentation by introducing the Implementation Support Webinar Series. Topics such as medical billing, covered services, and provider enrollment will be addressed as part of the series. Pamela Appleby led the second half of the session, where she explained the general structure and timeline associated with the implementation of Wisconsin Act 98 (2021). She touched on the enrollment pathway for pharmacists as Medicaid providers, the development process for the Medicaid State Plan, and how communication in regard to Wisconsin Act 98 progressions will be handled moving

forward.

Later in the afternoon, exhibit theaters, presentations on the future of the pharmacy workforce and careers in pharmacy, and a spotlight presentation on updates made to the PSW anticoagulation and CKD toolkit took place. A particularly unique and hands-on session, “Saturday Morning Mess: An Interactive Pharmacy Law Escape Room,” was led by pharmacists Michael DeBisschop and Kate Rotzenberg. This evening activity gave participants a time limit of one hour to solve eight puzzles in order to successfully (and legally) open the retail store, “Pharmer’s Market,” in time for the first patient to be served.

Day Two Details

After a successful first day, Karen Kopacek and Megan Grant opened day two of the PSW Educational Conference by leading the discussion, “Champions of Change: Make Your Story, Own Your Story, Tell Your Story.” The presentation began with the important concept of professional identity formation (PIF). Kopacek explained that PIF stems from piecing together both your personal and professional identities. By recognizing where your identity comes from, you are more equipped to begin telling your own identity story. She explained that PIF and storytelling go hand-in-hand as revealing your professional identity requires you to engage in self-reflection. Kopacek challenged each audience member to think about how their values and internal standards cause them to feel, think, and act in specific ways both in and out of the workplace. She ended her portion of the session with the following message: “Tell your story to know yourself, tell your story to know what has shaped it, and tell your story to bring about change.” From here, Megan Grant took the reins and addressed the components of a good story and how to share that story with peers and colleagues. Grant outlined the four C’s of storytelling: character, connection, conflict, and conquest. She instructed the audience to use the four C’s to construct a story that was tailored to members of their organizations. The three types of stories that can be told include the involvement story, the impact story, and the thank you story. The involvement story identifies why you got involved with your organization. The impact story focuses on how your

organization meets a specific need in the community. The thank you story is a simple acknowledgement to those who helped shape and support your identity formation. Grant encouraged the audience to share their stories during the remainder of the conference through the PSW app and at the “Tell Your Story PSW” booth.

The energy and motivation from the first general session led straight into the second general session of day two, “Upskilling and Reskilling Yourself and Your Team: A Guide to Blazing New Trails on a Professional Journey.” Executive Vice President and CEO of PSW, Sarah Sorum, invited Phyllis King, Jon Kaupla, and Sarah Sewell to the stage to discuss current and future workplace dynamics. The goals of this session were to identify factors that are impacting business and health care delivery and pinpoint strategies to best support new learning opportunities and healthy work environments for all team members. The panelists listed a number of realities in the workforce, such as the challenges of meeting the needs of five generations in the workplace, patient care via telehealth, the beginning of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the importance of supporting the mental and physical wellbeing of employees. Throughout the question and answer session, a number of topics were addressed, including strategies to retain talent, how to attract team members with diverse skillsets, the need for trauma-informed leadership, and the importance of building and maintaining trusting relationships with colleagues in the workplace.

After lunch on day two, conference-goers had the opportunity to attend more exhibit theaters, learn about residency accreditation standard revisions, and engage in a presentation about community health workers. Other learning opportunities during the afternoon included updates in prescribing practices for adeno-associated viral (AAV) gene therapies, opioids for pain management, and antibiotics to treat infectious diseases.

Closing Comments

It’s always a joy when the Wisconsin pharmacy community can come together. This year’s Educational Conference gave pharmacy professionals the opportunity to develop and share their stories and identities with colleagues from around the state. For

one person in particular, the conference made quite an impact. Jéssica Malta, a pharmacist who recently moved to Madison, Wis. from Brazil, wrote to PSW CEO Sarah Sorum to share her experience at the conference. “I am writing to express my gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the PSW Educational Conference. The conference was an excellent experience for me, and I really enjoyed it. I had the chance to practice my English, meet some people, and gain a better understanding of the pharmaceutical area here.” Thank you, Jéssica, for attending the conference this year!

Another conference-goer, Marnie Wickizer, said, “The PSW Educational Conference was so well done and just what I needed; it was incredibly uplifting!” Echoing Marnie, members of PSW did an outstanding job developing and hosting a conference that highlighted the importance of self-reflection, discussed challenges and changes occurring in the workplace, and provided updates about current trends in pharmacy practice.

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