

# Up Front: Taking a Victory Lap

by Sarah Sorum, PharmD



**H**ow many of you have a hard time making noise when you accomplish a milestone? Do you toot your own horn? Do you cheerlead for those behind you and celebrate them? Maybe both?

PSW is a collection of dedicated healthcare professionals that inspire one another to do more. We are continually working to be better – go from great to greater. Check out my [April CEO Blog post on A Growth Mindset](#).

PSW has a reflex to downplay our role, but I think we are overdue for a victory lap.

## *We are on an advocacy hot streak*

[PSW Advocacy Month](#) in March served as the perfect backdrop to see PBM reform legislation signed into law. [2021 WI Act 9](#) requires PBMs to be licensed with the WI Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) and gives OCI the authority to enforce laws relating to PBMs. Other provisions include fair pharmacy audits, guardrails around accreditation requirements, and clawback, gag clause, and retroactive recoupment prohibitions. It's a leap forward for PBM transparency in Wisconsin.

With the allowance for technician final product verification

or “tech-check-tech” in Phar 7 (effective 3/1/20), signing of 2021 [WI Act 3](#) (technician vaccination), and introduction of [SB300](#) (technician registration), PSW has greatly expanded pharmacy technician roles and laid groundwork for desperately needed improvements in recruitment and retention of qualified pharmacy technicians.

Our Pharmacist Provider Status bill has been introduced in Wisconsin – [SB255](#). I hope you've seen our new [video](#), showcasing this important evolution for team-based care. Be sure to also check out the amazing [materials](#) created by the PSW Provider Status Core Team and supported by the PSW Practice Advancement Leadership Team.

## *We rock at virtual conferences and resources*

PSW has pivoted on a dime to make virtual connection and community possible in our COVID times, including providing multiple virtual conferences, building a robust CE library shared nationally on a course marketplace, launching a brand new PSW website, and developing the new PSW Network platform that will debut this summer. While we are excited to return to in-person options later this year, PSW has demonstrated that virtual collaboration can be powerful and we do it really well. Aspects of

virtual connection are here to stay.

### ***Caring for COVID patients and vaccinating the state***

You know that moment when an Olympian is running their victory lap and they have members of their family or coaching team join them in the lap? Wisconsin vaccinators and pharmacy department operations teams have to join us for this part of the celebration. PSW and its members are the reason Wisconsin falls in the top 10 for percentage of residents fully vaccinated. Wisconsin is the number one state for rapid vaccine distribution.

The PSW staff, including me, have spent thousands of hours on COVID vaccine operations and advocacy discussions, partnership building, education, communication, and problem-solving. Our weekly COVID vaccine webinars, which we stood up in a matter of days, have provided absolutely essential information over the past several months. *FastFacts* has been full of information synthesized for Wisconsin pharmacists from countless meetings and information sources.

The provision of timely information from PSW included several virtual town halls on COVID-19, standing up a [COVID-19 resource page](#) (and keeping it up to date!), and many special alert emails. I was reminded this past week of the collaborative calls PSW facilitated around the logistics of patient transfers to the Alternate Care Facility at State Fair Park. I was also reminded of the instrumental role PSW and our members played in the ethical allocation of bamlanivimab and other monoclonal antibody supplies. We've been through a lot and PSW has served as a venue to connect and quickly adapt to improve patient care.

But this isn't the only lap

We know that we have lots of laps to go. We aren't going to stop running.

I have a vision for PSW. PSW is striving to be an inclusive leader that facilitates connection, engagement, and action together to advance our profession, strategically. The PSW Board of Directors has developed a [Plan 2025](#) that we can rally around. It includes breakthrough initiatives that build inclusivity and expand practice opportunities.

The servant leader in me is humbled by the selfless work that our members and our profession have done, day in and day out over the past year. I'm wowed seeing the walk-in vaccination clinics, equity projects, the investment in operational time standing up new services and service models. I'm inspired by members' willingness to share, problem-solve, mentor residents and students virtually, and by pharmacy teams' work in understaffed crisis situations.

We've had a year like no other, challenge like never before, and we have so much opportunity in the path ahead. All of this deserving of cheerleading and celebration. As servant leaders, we lead with heart and would perhaps prefer to blend in, letting others take the accolades instead of standing up and taking a bow at the applause. But, it's time to take that bow, make some noise on behalf of PSW, and take a victory lap before we run the next one.

- Sarah Sorum, PharmD  
Executive Vice President & CEO



## **Congratulations to 2018-2020 JPSW Open Access Coordinator**

Nicholas Friedlander, the 2018-2020 JPSW Open Access Coordinator, received the Best Resident or Fellow Poster (Prime Therapeutics; “Multiple Sclerosis Disease Modifying Drugs: Expenditure, Utilization, and New Start Trends among 15 Million Commercially Insured Members.”) from the AMCP Foundation and CVS Health at Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) 2021. The semi-annual Competition garnered 114 authors presenting cutting-edge research. Best Poster judges evaluated their research based on scientific merit, evidence that the research conducted was innovative and practical, strength and clarity of conclusions, and knowledge of the subject matter. Student pharmacists, residents, and fellows conducted live chats with over 2,000 leaders and professionals in the managed care setting.