Working together to strengthen the voice of pharmacy

AS THE WORLD OF PHARMACY CHANGES, SO TOO must the organizations that support the profession. Over the past year, CPhA has embarked on a journey towards a new governance and board structure, enhanced collaboration and renewed leadership. This journey will not be without its bumps and detours, but with hard work, determination and your support, CPhA will continue to evolve to meet the needs of the profession. The new CPhA will be a voice for both the profession and individual pharmacists.

Our current governance structure does not optimize the pan-Canadian approach to advocacy that pharmacy organizations must take to demonstrate the true value of pharmacists to the health care system. There is a clear call for more collaboration with all stakeholders to align provincial and national advocacy initiatives. We're proposing a membership model in which provincial and national pharmacy associations are CPhA members, and their members have access to a wide array of benefits from both associations. This model strengthens the entire profession by bringing one clear voice to health care discussions and by providing pharmacists with a wider range of education and practice tools to help provide the best possible care to patients. Our proposed model puts the patient care role of the pharmacist first, while supporting the financial viability and sustainability of pharmacy practice.

In addition, amendments to the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (CNCA) that will come into effect in October 2014 have required bylaw changes, some of which were passed at our 2013 Annual General Meeting (AGM). As a first phase toward becoming compliant with the CNCA, we have moved to a single class of member pharmacists, with current student and supporting members becoming affiliates. Final bylaw changes will be voted on at the June 2014 AGM in Saskatoon.

In terms of governance, the draft model proposes a Board of Directors that is both representative and skills based. Member organizations may have representation on the board, which would then be enhanced by the addition of directors with

specific qualifications and knowledge. A series of standing board committees and policy tables/advisory committees would direct the work of the association and effectively formulate evidence-based outputs.

This new model should enhance communication among all stakeholders who are members or affiliates or who populate our committees/policy tables.

Over the next year, CEO Perry Eisenschmid and I will reach out to our many constituents to transition CPhA to a new model. We will be listening to what our stakeholders are saying, and we will tweak our model, reach agreements with our membership groups and develop revenue models that are fair to everyone. We will be implementing new board policies and processes to support our new structure. We are committed to a new level of communication and are eager to hear your feedback on whether or not we are meeting our goals.

Sounds like a lot of work? It is. But we are all committed to making the necessary changes. We have a strong Board of Directors that has agreed to step aside as part of the implementation of the new model. We have a dedicated management team and staff to see the changes through. We have supportive members who recognize that status quo is not an option. And we have stakeholders who support our journey and believe that the voice of pharmacy must be strengthened across Canada. This is an exciting time for pharmacy and for CPhA, and we will not let this window of opportunity pass us by.

In the words of Charles Darwin, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Pharmacy must be responsive to change if we are to survive. We hope that you'll be a part of this journey with us.

Please contact us to share your thoughts and recommendations on *your* CPhA and how you think we can best serve you and the profession. E-mail executive@pharmacists.ca or call 1-800-917-9489 ext. 254 with your comments. You can also e-mail me directly at sherry.peister@sympatico.ca. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

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