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www.JoinTPA.org

Rx Notes is designed to keep members informed about TPA upcoming news and events and advocacy activities, along with industry news. We welcome member comments at aconwell@texaspharmacy.org.

2010 Rxperts Conference & Expo



Full package rates start at \$295
for pharmacists,
\$145 for technicians.

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July 15-18, 2010
Hilton Hotel Downtown
Austin, TX

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Rx Notes and Welcome to the new TPA

The first two months of 2010 have been very busy for your Association. Various leadership meetings have taken place recently - some in conjunction with the Leadership Institute in San Antonio, including the Texas Pharmacy Association (TPA) Board of Directors, the Texas Pharmacy Foundation Board (TPF) of Trustees and the TPA Past Presidents Roundtable. The Past Presidents will meet again on July 17 during the 2010 Conference & Expo in Austin.

In addition to the items covered in more detail in this issue of the newsletter, I want to share a few key activities that took place in the past few weeks.

- The TPF Board of trustees has developed a new Student Awards competitive program.
- The TPA Nominating Committee has announced a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors for 2010-2012. Elections to follow. [Click here for list of candidates.](#)
- The TPA Academy of Consultant Pharmacists had a productive meeting with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services Quality Monitoring staff to discuss the five focus areas of the Agency's quality monitoring professionals on their visits to facilities, including:

- 1) Attempt to achieve medication simplification on medication regimens and reduce duplication,
- 2) Pain management utilization
- 3) Antipsychotic (psychotropic) utilization
- 4) Anxiolytic utilization
- 5) Sedative-Hypnotic utilization

- Remember, the combination of reduced TPA membership dues along with inclusion of the Rxpert Center for Excellence, Pharmacist's Letter and Pharmacy Technician's Letter increase the value of membership.
- More Bylaws changes to come. The next set of TPA Bylaw recommendations will be considered by the House of Delegates at this year's 2010 Rxperts Conference and Expo. The proposed changes will be made available to review and submit comments beginning in late March. Be assured that there will be adequate opportunities to receive feed-back from academies, local associations and on the TPA website. A report incorporating all membership input will be provided to the House.

Now more than ever, your Association needs your support. Encourage your non-member colleagues to join TPA. Plan to attend the 2010 Rxperts Conference and Expo and TPA meeting in July in Austin - it will be different and exciting! ([Gene Adams](#))

THE NEW TPA

First Issue of Rx Notes

Welcome to the first issue of TPA's new electronic newsletter, *Rx Notes*. The first few issues will go to all Texas pharmacists, technicians and students. In order to continue receiving this valuable TPA member benefit join TPA today at www.jointpa.org.

The weekly newsletter will combine updates about TPA events and activities with advocacy information, industry news and links to professional resources and programs. It will be emailed in an HTML format, along with a text version to notify you that the issue is available online at www.rxpert.org. If you are unable to receive the HTML format, RxNotes will be available 24/7 online for your convenience. We hope you will find *Rx Notes* to be an important addition to the NEW TPA. ([Joe DaSilva](#) / [Audra Conwell](#) / [Chuck Waters](#))

New TPA website

The new TPA website, www.rxpert.org, is live! Please bear with us as we continue to work out glitches in the new site over the next few days. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to improve and update the appearance, navigation and expand content of the site. The site will increase visibility for patient-focused programs and resources. Patients/consumers now have their own distinct section of the website, as will TPA partners and corporate members. The site will feature more “live” content such as video and live news feeds. ([Chuck Waters](#))

One of the new components of the TPA website is an interactive communication vehicle authored by Joe A. DaSilva, TPA’s new executive director/CEO. Titled *Just My Thoughts*, this BLOG will complement the information provided on our website and the new newsletter. At least once each week, he will share his thoughts regarding TPA events, activities and structure; public policy issues impacting the pharmacy profession; key TPA advocacy efforts; and Texas politics. Members will be able to leave comments, read all comments and see the response to each comment. ([Joe DaSilva](#))

Rxperts Center for Excellence

Along with the Association’s umbrella website, TPA’s new Rxperts Center for Excellence website is also now live. TPA members now have access to more than 100 hours of CE at no additional charge. You can access CE through TPA’s site or directly at www.rxcellence.org. The Center features live and on-demand CE 24/7, the Pharmacist’s Letter, Pharmacy Technician’s Letter, online portfolio functions to track CE and professional development activities, and resources on scholarships, fellowships, residencies and leadership programs for pharmacists and technicians. The constantly updating CE content will include both live and on-demand webinars. ([Lisa Goerlitz](#))

ADVOCACY

General

TPA continues to increase its involvement in the advocacy arena - with a goal to have an effective, experienced and knowledgeable in-house government relations team in place before the start of the 2011 legislative session. TPA advocacy activities and public policy development process will include representation of all practice areas within the pharmacy community.

In addition to the public policy issues addressed below, TPA has participated in a number of other meetings with agency staff regarding proposed government activities impacting pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. The Association already has made clear our opposition to both the 1 percent Medicaid pharmacy reimbursement reduction being considered by the Health and Human Services Commission as well as considerations by the state to implement a consumer-based pharmacy price reporting system covering all pharmacies. ([Joe DaSilva](#))

Medication Disposal – Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

Joe DaSilva and Kim Roberson, TPA staff, participated in the first meeting of the Pharmaceutical Disposal Advisory Group on January 26. The Pharmaceutical Disposal Advisory Group (PDAG) met to discuss the goals and intent of SB 1757, which requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to study disposal of unused pharmaceuticals by pharmacies, consumers, hospitals and other health-care providers. TPA will recommend actions to TCEQ to minimize pharmaceuticals in Texas water sources. Representatives from the Texas Board of Pharmacy, the Texas Federation of Drug Stores and other pharmacy and pharmaceutical organizations also were in attendance. Meetings will be held monthly and a report will be finalized by December 2010. ([Kim Roberson](#))

The second meeting was held on February 26, to discuss current methods and alternatives for the disposal of unused pharmaceuticals and to develop options the Legislature can consider for dealing with this issue. Stakeholders include state and federal agencies, including: the Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of Public Safety, the United States Postal Service, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, local governments, water utilities and other water suppliers, pharmaceutical manufacturers, pharmacies, health-care providers, including home health care providers, hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities, solid waste management service providers, as well as transporters and processors of medical waste, ranchers and farmers and the public. In addition to TPA, pharmacy representatives present were Kathy Baker (TFDS), Gay Dodson (TSBP), Cheri Huddleston (TBC) and Mary Staples (NACDS). Karen Tannert from DSHS was also present.

Work groups continued efforts to identify, estimate and discuss the impact of unused medications from all sources. Initial discussions identified reverse distribution and medication destruction processes already in place in most every pharmacy. Discussions also identified the lack of education and methods for consumers to effectively dispose of unused medication and how hazardous household waste collection systems already in place may be utilized to address this. TCEQ is developing a survey to be distributed within the next month to help gather background information. Watch the newsletter and the TPA website for information about this survey and how

to participate. The TCEQ is planning at least two additional meetings. For further information, meeting minutes, etc., visit the TCEQ website at: http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/water_supply/pdw/pdagroup.

Senate Hearing on H1N1

The Senate Committee on Health and Human Services met on February 24 to review the state's ability to appropriately respond to the H1N1 influenza pandemic. The Committee examined issues related to vaccine distribution and capacity, standardized protocols for school districts and the effectiveness and efficiency of immunization information systems. David L. Lakey, M.D., commissioner, Texas Department of State Health Services and John T. Carlo, M.D., M.S.E., medical director – Dallas County Health and Human Services participated on one of the panels and were among the many individuals and organizations that provided testimony during the hearing. Both highlighted the ability and willingness of pharmacists to provide distribution systems and services during the 2009-2010 influenza season. With pharmacist involvement, Texas' response to seasonal flu and antiviral distribution was exceptional and serves as a model for other states. Kathy Barber, executive director, Texas Federation of Drug Stores also testified before the Committee. TPA listened to the hearing and submitted written testimony to the Committee. Our letter included our concerns with the speed and fairness of the distribution system for vaccines. [Click here to read TPA's letter.](#)

TPA continues to support and advance pharmacist-based immunization services with state legislators and public health officials. For information about [getting started with immunizations click here](#). [Click here for additional useful links.](#) (Kim Roberson)

Closed Pharmacy Formulary for the Worker's Compensation Program

Joe DaSilva and Kim Roberson, TPA staff, met with representatives of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI-DWC) on February 22. Discussions focused on establishment of a Closed Pharmacy Formulary for Worker's Compensation Program. The agency is continuing to seek input on the informal rules that have been developed. It is anticipated that the rules will be formally submitted for comments by late summer, with a final implementation date of January 1, 2011.

During our meeting, TPA committed to assist the agency in creating working groups of pharmacists and insurers and to create educational opportunities for pharmacists between the time the rules are adopted and the implementation date.

The TDI-WCD is accepting comments on these informally proposed rules to amend 28 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §134.500 and §134.506, and to propose new 28 TAC §134.507 – 134.511 regarding a Pharmacy Closed Formulary and to amend 28 TAC §133.306 regarding Interlocutory Orders for Medical Benefits. The informal proposal may be viewed on the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/wc/rules/drafts.html>.

The purpose of the informal proposal is to seek input from impacted participants regarding the rules and the implementation process for a pharmacy closed formulary in the Texas Workers' Compensation System. This informal proposal is a further step in the process toward formally proposing rules that will comply with the requirements of House Bill 7, 79th Legislature, Regular Session (effective September 1, 2005); which mandates the adoption of a pharmacy closed formulary under Texas Labor Code (TLC) §408.028(b). The comment period closes March 5, 2010, at 5 p.m. CST.

This informal working draft is not a formal rule proposal. Accordingly, comments will not be treated as formal public comment for the purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act. In addition to commenting on this informal proposal, there will be the opportunity to formally comment once the rules are proposed and published in the Texas Register. (Kim Roberson)

PharmPAC Endorsements

The recently overhauled and adopted bylaws governing PharmPAC, TPA's political action committee, guided the newly composed PharmPAC Board of Directors during its January 30 meeting. Following extensive debate, the Board endorsed a total of 158 legislative and statewide candidates for the Texas primary and general elections. [Click here](#) for comprehensive list. Letters have been sent to the more than 150 endorsed candidates and political contributions for many of these candidates continue to take place. Just a reminder that tomorrow—March 2—is the day for primary elections. (Joe DaSilva)

EDUCATION

Rxperts Center for Excellence

As noted above, TPA's new Rxperts Center for Excellence website is live and can be accessed through the TPA website or directly at www.rxcexcellence.org. Members have access to more than 100 hours of continuing education opportunities in the Center and as an additional member benefit, CE offered by the Pharmacist's Letter and Pharmacy Technician's Letter. (Kurt Wehrs)

Pharmacy Law Symposium

TPA's next Pharmacy Law Symposium will be held in Austin on March 27. Additional symposia will be held in June and October this year. The Pharmacy Law course continues to draw registrants from across Texas and out of state. Sales of the TPA-affiliated Guide to Texas Pharmacy and Drug Law remain very strong. ([Lisa Goerlitz](#))

Rxperts Leadership Institute

TPA's 2010 Rxperts Leadership Institute took place on Feb. 5-7, 2010, in San Antonio. The 2010 Leadership Institute brought together 13 new Texas practitioners to work in a retreat setting to develop leadership skills that enable both personal and professional growth. They were chosen to participate from statewide nominees based on their leadership qualities, community service and contributions to the profession. ([Joy Kovar](#))

2010 Rxperts Conference & Expo

More change. More fun. More education. Twenty-five CE presenters have confirmed for TPA's 2010 Rxperts Conference & Expo in Austin. Presenters come from a variety of practice settings and faculty members of the state's six pharmacy schools. The 25 sessions on July 15-18 cover clinical drug therapy, patient safety, pharmacy law and pharmacy operations. Pharmacists and technicians can earn at least 15 hours of CE credit at the conference. A pre-conference day on July 14 will feature Immunization certification and a Pharmacy Technician Seminar Series. The Conference has been split into two distinct segments: a 2.5-day education conference focusing on professional development and support, followed by a 1-day leadership conference for TPA business.

The 2010 student counseling competition at the Conference will focus on pain management and will include significant financial awards to be paid directly to the student finalists and winners. Additionally, the Texas Pharmacy Foundation is finalizing a pharmacy school-based awards program that will be announced at conference. Registration has already exceeded 160 pharmacists and technicians. Register before April 14 to receive your discount! ([Kurt Wehrs](#))

Professional Recovery Network

PRN's 2010 Spring Seminar will be held April 25 at the Hilton Austin Airport. More than 140 Texas pharmacy and dental professionals attended the PRN Fall Seminar held in October 2009. ([Donna Chamberlain](#))

MEMBERSHIP

The campaign to create and promote a "new" TPA has been underway for three months. The initial results were very satisfying. Unfortunately, some of the improvements in services and programs—originally scheduled to be unveiled in January—are rolling-out this month. As a part of a re-energized commitment to excellence, the reduction in pharmacists' dues was well received. Not only were dues reduced from \$300 to \$245, but the new amount now includes an online subscription to The Pharmacist's Letter.

TPA membership has a long way to go, March 1, our numbers showed:

Pharmacist members—1,370

- renewals—1,268
- not yet renewed—448
- new – since 11/09—102

Technician members—268

- renewed—244
- not yet renewed—166
- new – since 11/09—24

By the way, there are 26,058 licensed pharmacists and 64,279 licensed pharmacy technicians in Texas. Yes, we have a very long way to go, but the next step starts with you. If you have not yet renewed or joined, please do so. If you want to further your profession, get others to join too. www.jointpa.org ([Joe DaSilva](#) / [Jenny Lindsey](#))

2010 TSHP Candidates Announced

TSHP E-News February 1 issue reports, TSHP Immediate Past President Mike Sanborn has announced the Nominations Committee's recommendations for candidates for 2010 TSHP Officer Elections. Named to run for President-Elect are Valerie Bandy of Austin and

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Brian Cohen of Dallas. Candidates for Treasurer will be Janet Haskin of El Paso and Nancy Myers of Dallas. The slate will be formally presented to the membership at the Annual Business Meeting, following the TSHP Installation lunch on Sunday, April 11 at the Annual Seminar.

NACDS Foundation Launches Patient Care Database

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores Foundation has developed a fully searchable resource dedicated to raising the public's awareness of such topics as medication adherence and other patient services provided by community pharmacy.

NACDS Foundation's new patient care database was in development for one year before its launch. It aims to archive and track pharmacist-provided patient care activities and services in the community pharmacy setting through its user-friendly, searchable, web-based database. The database consists of media articles, academic studies, research materials and other resources related to the services provided by pharmacists, including MTM services, vaccination administration, diagnostic screenings and patient counseling. It will help identify trends in pharmacy and allow academia and pharmacy students to study, track and evaluate the short-term and long-term public health benefits of expanded pharmacist-provided health care.

[View article here.](http://www.nacdsfoundation.org/PCD/) View patient care database at <http://www.nacdsfoundation.org/PCD/>

Immunization Action Coalition Publications

The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) has just released its February 2010 issue of [Needle Tips](#), for all health professionals who give vaccines. Also available is [Vaccinate Adults](#), a version of Needle Tips modified for those who work only with adult patients. Both are now available for online reading and/or printing.

These publications contain ready-to-print educational materials for health care professionals and their patients, updated immunization schedules, vaccine news highlights, and IAC's popular "Ask the Experts" question-and-answer column with answers by CDC experts William Atkinson, MD, MPH, and Andrew Kroger, MD, MPH.

IAC is now in its second year of publishing these periodicals exclusively online. Current and past issues of Needle Tips are available at www.immunize.org/nt and Vaccinate Adults at www.immunize.org/va. To receive direct notification when new issues are published, subscribe at www.immunize.org/subscribe. On this page, you can also subscribe for free to IAC's weekly email news service, IAC Express, which keeps you up to date on immunization news between issues of IAC's periodicals.

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Have You Read the Fine Print on Your Third Party Contract Lately?

Did you know, in order to be compliant with CMS regulations and network contract requirements pharmacies must have a quality improvement program? Most contracts ask you to implement and maintain a verifiable, documented pharmacy quality assurance program.

Pharmacy Quality Commitment offers an easy way for you to come into compliance with this requirement. It is easily implemented into your pharmacy's daily routine and extensive toll free and online support is provided to get you started. PQC is a product offered by the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS), a federally listed Patient Safety Organization. APMS provides legal protection and confidentiality for submitted patient safety data and error reports. Go to www.pqc.net to find out more about the program and get in compliance today!

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