

Report of the Executive Director

May 6th, 2017

As the executive council of the PEI Pharmacists Association laid out their priorities for the 2016-2017 year, the stage was set for a very ambitious year.

At the direction of the membership at the 2016 annual general meeting, the executive tasked the bylaw committee with a bylaw review; the goal being to provide recommendations on the amendments that would be required to enable the addition of a pharmacy technicians category to the PEI Pharmacists Association membership roster. That work has been done, and the proposed changes will be presented to the membership at this year's annual general meeting for approval.

Work on a new strategic plan for the Association was another major undertaking of the executive. Strategic goals and priorities were identified, and the newly elected executive will be tasked with continuing work on implementing a work plan to achieve these goals. The executive articulated the vision of the Association, "Improved health, wellness, and quality of life for all Islanders through accessible and sustainable pharmacy care" as well as our mission, "Empowering members to improve medication use and advance patient care". The development of a new strategic plan for the Association was undertaken to provide a disciplined approach to the management of the Prince Edward Island Pharmacists Association over the next five years.

The Pharmacy Services Agreement between the PEI Pharmacists Association and the Province of PEI expired in April, 2016. Work to negotiate a new agreement is ongoing, thus the current agreement remains in effect.

Pharmacists continue to be an integral part of the provincial publicly funded influenza immunization program, and have proven to be the provider of choice for the service for the majority of Islanders. For the 2016-17 season, a total allotment of 39,000 doses was made available for community administration, split evenly between the three immunizer groups: pharmacists, physicians and public health nursing.

Throughout the season, pharmacy experienced stock outages at the wholesaler, due to demand. Redistribution of unused stock from other immunizers took place, and the total number of vaccines administered by pharmacists exceeded 16,125 doses (numbers reported February 27th, 2017) or 42%. This is approximately 2000 more doses than administered last year, due largely to the fact that we had even more issues with supply in the 2015-16 season. It is hoped that the initial allotment will continue to increase, as demand from pharmacies has been clearly illustrated. Interestingly, in 2014, the first year we participated in the program, our initial allotment was 4500 doses (due to reallocation of doses, we were able to provide just under 10,000 vaccinations in that first year, despite supply challenges). The announcement that PEI will be funding a universal flu program is an interesting development. The Association looks forward to working with government to see an increase of immunization rates with the introduction of this new policy!

The PEI Pharmacists Association continues to benefit from collaboration with the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) and the other provincial pharmacists associations. The provinces are now more hands-on in providing direction to CPhA with respect to our needs and identifying what supports CPhA can provide to assist us with our provincial priorities.

A great example of this support is the recently published “Benefits of pharmacist care in hypertension management” study which was supported by CPhA. When undertaking discussions regarding reimbursement for pharmacy services, provincial associations are often impeded by the lack of research available to demonstrate the economic benefits of pharmacist care. This study is the first study of its kind to highlight significant economic impact of pharmacist care in hypertension management, while improving health outcomes.

Professional image strategies continue to be supported through focus groups and national public opinion surveys, coordinated by CPhA. This work is being used to develop a national ‘branding’ of pharmacists, as well as common messaging during Pharmacist Awareness Month/Week.

As executive director, I am involved in numerous advisory and working groups, coordinated through CPhA. These include: Third Party Payers, Advocacy, Communications, Pharmacist Awareness Month/Week, Member Affinity Programs, Continuing Professional Development, and more.

Provincially, I represent the PEI Pharmacist Association perspective in the Provincial Diabetes Strategy, the Provincial Opioid Strategy, the PEI Tobacco Reduction Alliance, and other initiatives.

Member benefits and affinity programs continue to be a priority of the Association. New benefits are being added all the time, and members are encouraged to take advantage of these value-add initiatives. Please let us know if there is a particular benefit you would like investigated for inclusion in our member-benefit package.

The Association is always looking to increase member engagement in the work of the Association. There are numerous opportunities available to share your talents, while getting involved in your profession. Please contact the Association office to express interest!

Respectfully submitted,

Erin MacKenzie