

Opportunity of a Lifetime at the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists

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2015 CSHP Summer Pharmacy Intern



This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to be selected to work at the office of the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP) in Ottawa. I had just finished my third year of pharmacy at the University of British Columbia (UBC), with little prior exposure to hospital pharmacy practice. I was eager to learn, get involved, and participate in advancing the profession of hospital pharmacy.

Arriving for the first time in Ottawa, I was greeted warmly by the CSHP staff, including Myrella Roy (Executive Director), Cathy Lyder (Coordinator of Professional and Membership Affairs), and Desarae Davidson (Interim Operations Manager). They offered guidance and support along the way, and the experience would not have been as enjoyable without the lovely team. During my time at CSHP, I worked on several projects, such as devising a gap analysis tool for compounding, analyzing data for an article on compounding, helping with a survey that aims to understand the needs of pharmacy personnel in order to implement best practices in aseptic compounding, providing 10 reasons why membership in a professional association is beneficial, and updating membership recruitment brochures.

I was also fortunate to sit in on meetings with the strategic planning working group, the Membership Committee, the Life after CSHP 2015 working group, and the Compounding Knowledge Mobilization Task Force. During these meetings, I had the privilege of working with Executive Officers and staff members on the new strategic plan for 2015-2018 and also aiding in the outline of a new engaging initiative that focuses CSHP's efforts on improving patient health outcomes. I also participated with Board members on completing the survey conducted by the Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA) on Pharmacare 2.0, with the goal of developing a national consensus for a pan-Canadian pharmacare framework.

Outside of the office, I visited several organizations and hospitals, including the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (general paediatrics and bone marrow transplant), the Ottawa Hospital (oncology), the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH), and the CPhA. I thoroughly enjoyed each of these various visitations, learning about the pharmacist's role in the hospital setting and its contribution to the care of patients within the health care team. At CADTH, I was introduced to the common drug review, the rapid response service, critical appraisal skills, and other great ways in which CADTH independently discerns evidence to help health care decision-makers with making informed decisions about the optimal use of drugs and devices in jurisdictions across the country.

Near the end of the summer, I attended the 68th and final Summer Educational Sessions (SES) held by CSHP. It was truly the highlight of my internship with CSHP. I was immersed into an environment filled with pharmacists who were passionate about hospital practice and collaborative health care. I felt honoured to sit in on Executive Committee and Board meetings. I got to see first-hand how CSHP is run on a national level as well as how the discussions take place before making decisions. I attended joint officer meetings with the Ontario Branch Council, the Ontario College of Pharmacists, and CPhA. It was reassuring to learn how actions are being taken to ensure that hospital pharmacies in Ontario provide safe care to patients. It is encouraging to witness the professional passion of pharmacists who have moved on to working in regulatory authorities and associations, keeping hospital pharmacy near and dear to their hearts.

Not only was I involved in meetings, but I also attended a few educational sessions, receiving up-to-date information on current therapies in perioperative anticoagulation, aspiration pneumonia, systolic heart failure, and smoking cessation. I really felt that the CSHP Executive Officers, the Board members, and committee members took me under their wing as a fledgling pharmacist, helping to guide and mentor me along the way. In addition to its many educational benefits, SES provided an incredible social experience, with a Fun Run/Walk early in the morning, a carnival-themed Fun Night at the Museum of Nature, and a Gatsby-like masquerade for the Past Presidents' Dinner and Dance.

I honestly believe that hospital pharmacists can best advocate for themselves by demonstrating their value to both the health care team and the patient. CSHP would not be possible without the dedication of volunteers in committees and leadership positions as well as the staff. I am excited to share what I have learned with my peers and cannot wait to apply these skills and knowledge in my future career. I view this not as an end, but rather as a beginning for me with CSHP. To all student pharmacists who are considering an internship with CSHP, I would give my highest recommendation for this splendid opportunity!