

An unexpected, unplanned internship with CSHP



Charles Au

Carl Sandburg, a dynamic American poet and writer, once said, “Nearly all the best things that came to me in life have been unexpected, unplanned by me.” This perfectly describes my internship with CSHP as a third-year pharmacy student at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Having planned to work the summer in retail pharmacy, I received the internship offer in mid-June and by early July, I was in Ottawa under the blanket of a sweltering heat wave.

Having had little experience with either office work or hospital pharmacy, I was thrown right into the fire, with the “honour” of being the only male to currently work in the CSHP National office. I learned by jumping directly into meetings and teleconferences with staff, the ADAPT initiative (www.pharmacists.ca/ADAPT), the Blueprint for Pharmacy Steering Committee (www.blueprintforpharmacy.ca), the Editorial Board of the

Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy, and the Canadian Hospital Pharmacy Residency Board. I helped with background research for the Council meetings and organization for the Summer Educational Sessions (SES 2010). With Cathy Lyder, our Coordinator of Membership and Professional Affairs, I worked to cross-map our Official Publications (http://www.cshp.ca/productsServices/officialPublications/subject_e.asp) with the Basel Statements on the future of hospital pharmacy of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (<http://www.fip.org/globalconf>) and contributed to ongoing revision of some Official Publications. Drawing on my involvement with student affairs at UBC, I also offered suggestions for the “Student Corner” Web page under development, in order to encourage more students to become CSHP members.

In addition to being immersed in current issues that face hospital pharmacy and the Society, I had other learning opportunities outside the office. I was fortunate to visit the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario, the Ottawa Hospital – General Campus, the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health, and the Canadian Pharmacists Association. At SES 2010 in Halifax, the highlight of my internship, I participated in the preceding Executive and Council meetings, attended the educational sessions, and met delegates and residents from across the country! The conference was a great way for me to learn “from the horse’s mouth” about the direction and scope of many issues, including pharmacy technician regulation, curricular and experiential training changes, and the tight hospital budgets that make it challenging for pharmacists to attend continuing education events or volunteer for the Society. This year was also when we started developing the new CSHP strategic plan for the years 2011 to 2014, and it was exciting to contribute to the Society’s upcoming new vision and strategic directions!

After spending two all-too-short months with CSHP, I have had what could be described as a “panoramic snapshot” of the current scope of hospital pharmacy practice across the nation, the directions in which we seek to progress, and the role of the Society in empowering our profession. I am inspired by the dedication of all the pharmacists I met, who volunteer their time (some even using their vacation days!) in order to contribute to and realize our shared vision. None of this would have been possible without the enthusiastic support I received from Myrella Roy (Executive Director), Cathy Lyder, CSHP office staff, the CSHP Council, and my friends and family. It has been an honour to work with the fabulous people at CSHP, and I hope to follow the footsteps of my new role models and to give back to the profession in the near future!

CSHP is now accepting applications for the 2011 summer intern position. Please see the ad in this issue of the eBulletin for more details. Deadline: December 6 2010.