

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as CPS President. I am truly honored to serve our profession and our state society. When I decided to become a pharmacist at age 16, I never imagined I would be standing here today, nor would I have imagined how far we have come as a profession. I still recall having to redo my ointment preparation in my first year in pharmacy school because it lacked “pharmaceutical elegance”. After being crushed after my lack of “elegance”, I luckily persevered through pharmacy school and thankfully have never make an ointment since that time.

I also want to thank you all for being here. Whether it was the wonderful opportunity to hear from Paul Abramowitz, the chance to try your luck at the roulette table, or the opportunity to network with your colleagues, you are making a difference. It is incredibly important to engage with the national pharmacy professional societies, such as ASHP, APhA, ACCP and others. They have the power at the federal level to advocate for federal provider status and positively impacting the tragedy that is DIR fees and making sure pharmacists are recognized in new healthcare models of care and reimbursement. However, never forget the need for a powerful and relevant state pharmacy association.

The fact you are here means you recognize the importance of your state society. Pharmacy scope of practice is defined at the state level through each state’s pharmacy practice act. Colorado is no different. We have an incredibly important opportunity in 2021 when our pharmacy practice act sunsets and we have the chance to directly influence our scope of practice and our ability to provide care to the patients we serve.

Today, we have the privilege of being known, at least in statute, of being healthcare providers in our great state. We have fought hard for statewide protocols and the ability to now prescribe contraceptives and smoking cessation medications. We know the rate of unintended pregnancies decrease when women have access to contraception, particularly in their pharmacies. In an article just published in JAMA last month, in states where pharmacists can directly provide naloxone to patients, there were significant decreases in fatal opioid overdoses. Colorado is one of those states.

We need to build upon our legislative victories to date. In 2018, CPS passed HB18-1112, which requires health plans to provide coverage for pharmacist-

provided health care services in Health Professional Shortage Areas, or “HPSAs”, whether they be rural or facility designated. This is a relatively small win, but it is tremendously important for our profession and hopefully builds the infrastructure for billing and reimbursement for non-dispensing services. As president, I am convening an ad-hoc task force of pharmacy leaders in our state to create processes for credentialing and billing to make sure this bill is fully implemented. I have identified a couple of key individuals, but please let me know if you also wish to serve on this group.

As a society, we also need to introduce PBM legislation. PBM’s financial and restrictive policies continue to impact our pharmacies ability to operate successfully and provide optimal patient care. I and Emily Zadvorny plan to convene stakeholder meetings beginning this fall to draft legislation we plan to introduce in the 2020 legislative session. PBM and DIR legislation was well received in a larger healthcare bill in 2019. The bill was killed due to other components of the bill, but we think if we focus on PBMs and DIR fees, we may have an opportunity to be successful. We plan to involve the retail council, independent pharmacies, and other health professionals. We need your help as well. Make no mistake; this will not be easy. Our community pharmacy colleagues, as well as our patients, need our help.

When you leave this meeting with hopefully a few extra dollars in your pocket from your gaming success, please also tell your colleagues about this meeting and the importance of a strong and relevant state professional society. While we have had good growth, strong victories at the Capitol, and a resurgence of interest, we need your help and commitment to continue to make a difference for our profession.

Last, I’d like to thank my family and my husband for their never ending support and love. My husband and I are celebrating our one-year anniversary this weekend and I’m incredibly thankful for him and his willingness to care for three teenagers while I’m involved with work and CPS activities.