



COLORADO PHARMACY
FRONTLINE
PROFESSIONALS SUMMIT
FINAL REPORT
April X, 2025



COLORADO
PHARMACISTS
SOCIETY

YOUR BOSS THINKS IT'S
BETTER, DO YOU?

A SUMMIT TO
ADVANCE
COLORADO'S
FRONTLINE
PHARMACIST AND
TECHNICIAN VOICES

In conjunction with:



&



Table of Contents

Frontline Summit Overview	2
Key Challenges and Proposed Solutions	3
Themes Identified and Associated Action Items	3
Results of Frontline Summit Post-Meeting Survey	5
Goals and Next Steps	7
Appendix A: Frontline Summit Agenda	9
Appendix B: Frontline Summit Flyer	10

Frontline Summit Overview

The Colorado Pharmacists Society, in conjunction with Regis University School of Pharmacy and University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, supported the Colorado Pharmacy Professionals Frontline Summit. This Summit entitled: Your Boss Thinks It's Better...Do You? A Summit to Advance Colorado's Frontline Pharmacist and Technician Voices was held on February 27, 2025. The title for this second in-person gathering of Colorado pharmacy professionals was developed with the intent to drive attendance from those working on the frontlines with patients. The Fall 2024 initial summit demonstrated tremendous value towards gathering several key stakeholders (upper management/leadership in on-patient facing roles primarily) in one room with the majority being upper management/leadership of their respective organizations (in contrast to patient-facing stakeholders). In turn, there were many that felt they could not attend the initial summit given the presence of management from the various stakeholders and the potential ensuing challenges. Therefore, the Colorado Pharmacists Society Workplace Conditions and Well-being Taskforce felt the need to provide an opportunity for frontline voices to have a safe space to gather and openly discuss not only challenges but also progress since the pandemic. To achieve this goal, the summit was intentionally limited to those taking care of patients (pharmacists, technicians, and student interns). The Frontline Summit was a hybrid event by design, with in person and virtual attendance encouraged. It was held on the evening of February 25th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. The evening was structured to provide as much time as possible to be spent in smaller groups to solicit feedback. Attendees were pre-assigned to breakout rooms of like disciplines (hospital, community, students, technicians, etc). There were seven breakout rooms (two in person and five online). Members of the task force served as overall moderators for the evening and the breakout sessions. The formal agenda is included in Appendix A.

Over 60 individuals from the following organizations either pre-registered (~50) and/or showed up (~10) to attend the event: *Advent Health, Albertsons/Safeway, Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Pharmacists Society (CPS), Denver Health, Intermountain Health, King Soopers City Market, Regis University School of Pharmacy, UC Health, University of Colorado Skaggs School of Pharmacy, VA Eastern Colorado Healthcare System, and Walmart.* Other organizations could have been represented; attendees were not required to provide their organization upon registration, and thus some individuals chose to be anonymous regarding their exact employer. Unfortunately, a good portion of those pre-registered did not show up for the Summit, and it influenced the breakout room distributions. Despite the challenges, there were many good discussions which were outlined below.

Key Challenges and Proposed Solutions

Throughout the Summit, participants shared insights and experiences of challenges faced, specifically to their unique work environments. Discussions were initiated based on a series of questions as noted in the Summit agenda in Appendix A. They reflected a wide range of issues from operational concerns to mental health challenges, that impact both individual pharmacists and the overall effectiveness of pharmacy teams.

The following table (Table 1) represents the five unaided themes that emerged from the Frontline Summit. They were synthesized from the discussions held throughout the evening and the breakout groups as well as suggested actions by attendees. The five themes (noted parenthetically) align with the four themes that were identified prior to the Fall summit as key areas requiring attention and improvement: Workforce Challenges (Staffing, Work Environment, Advocacy for the Profession), Workplace Civility (Staffing, Work Environment, Leadership, Training), Payment Reform and Workplace Technology and Efficiency (Work Environment and Leadership).

Recipients of this report (and viewers via the CPS website) are encouraged to carefully review these themes and consider any number of suggested actions steps they could address in their own organizations, or supporting others, through a collaborative approach to effectively address these challenges.

Table 1: Summary of Discussions from the Frontline Workers' Summit

Theme	Action Items
Staffing	• Provide adequate wage for technicians to encourage retention • Develop career paths with corresponding pay increases, such as immunization certificates for technicians • Ensure adequate pharmacist overlap to support issues that must be addressed by a licensed pharmacist • Secure financial and recruitment support for “talent pipeline” for pharmacists and technicians • Acknowledge demands of school for student interns

Work environment	• Define clear expectations for each shift and staff member • Improve efficiency of system so that patients are not waiting unnecessarily • Share information and provide mechanisms for communication ○ Pharmacist sharing delays due to prior authorization requests with providers and patients ○ Providers sharing notes with pharmacists ○ Pharmacies sharing prescription fill process with patients ○ Use daily handoffs and huddles between shifts • Continue to provide protected dedicated rest and meal breaks • Adjust pharmacy hours to improve work-life balance and encourage staff retention while maintaining reasonable access for patients • Prioritize patient care over metrics • Use technology (including AI), store partnerships, and flex staff to ease stressful times, particularly during vaccine season
Leadership	• Require on-site leader presence • Provide leadership training for Pharmacists in Charge
Training	• Dedicate more time to train newly hired staff to improve quality, teamwork, and staff retention
Advocacy for the profession	• Invest more in lobbyists at national level • Increase advocacy at the state level • Promote positive aspects of pharmacy • Re-establish/recommit direct pharmacist-patient relationship and care • Advocate for financial reform and reimbursement to support pharmacist care

Results of Frontline Summit Post-Meeting Survey

As a follow-up to the Frontline Summit and in keeping with the initial Summit, a survey was sent to obtain impressions of the Frontline Summit and glean feedback on the discussions as well as insights from those who registered but could not attend. Questions 2-3 were specific to Frontline Summit attendees, and questions 1, 4-6 were asked of both attendees and those that registered but did not attend. Below are the results of the survey.

1. Did you attend the Frontline Summit?

- a. Yes (6 respondents)
- b. No (0 respondents; this response was for those that pre-registered and could not attend)

2. Overall, what was your impression of the Summit? (4 respondents)

- 75% indicated the Summit was worth their time, and they will champion and lead change within their organizations.
- 1 respondent indicated it was not worth their time, with no explanation provided.

3. What was the most useful aspect or takeaway of the Summit? (6 respondents)

This question was designed for open ended responses and included:

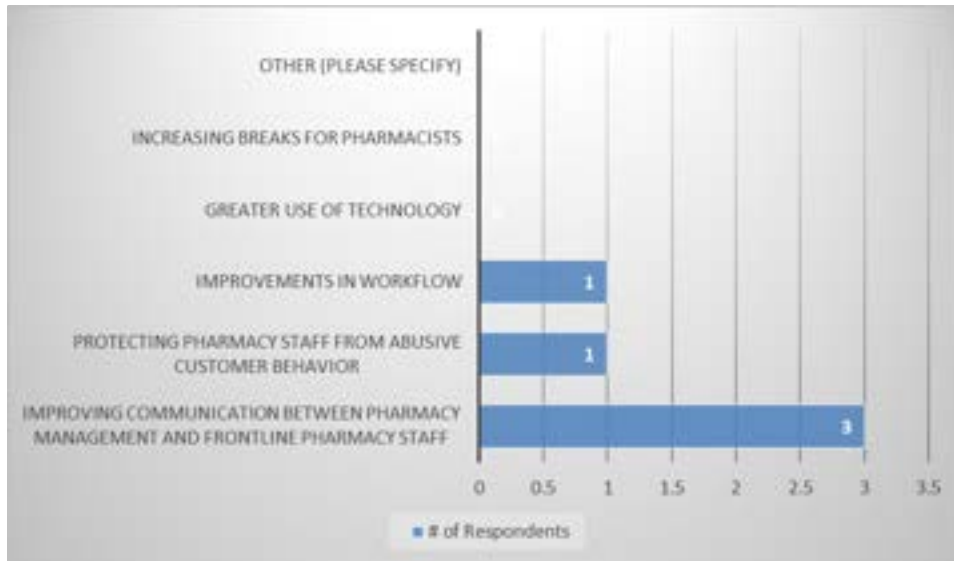
- Hearing different perspectives
- Insight and discussion from participants
- Communication among peers
- Much of the information from the technicians that attended re: making them feel valued, etc

4. What was the least useful aspect of the Summit? (6 respondents)

This question was designed for open ended responses and included:

- I was placed in a small group with other people in the same company, so there was little learned from that session because there were no other perspectives
- Uneven group assignments
- Low attendance
- The breakout sessions -- they were almost too small

5. What ideas have been implemented at your workplace to improve efficiency and increase overall well-being for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians? (Select all that apply) (4 respondents)



The top three responses mirrored those of the Fall Summit.

6. **How can we continue the dialogue and the work initiated at the Summit?** (Select all that apply) (0 respondents)
7. **Please share any additional comments.** (1 respondent)
This question was designed for open-ended responses of which one was received relating to having a smaller and less productive break-out session and wanting to have more time for summary at the end of the Summit.
8. **I was not able to attend the summit because...** (0 respondents)
Unfortunately, there were several people who registered that did not show up for the Frontline Summit. The task force was hoping to understand what barriers arose for these non-attendees; however, they did not respond to the post-meeting survey.

Goals & Next Steps

Frontline Summit Attendees Potential Next Steps

The Frontline Summit Planning Committee encourages all of those who expressed interest and could not make it/attended the Frontline Summit to focus on and consider the following:

- Action steps identified herein in Table 1.
- Action Steps identified in the [CPS Final Report](#)
- Actions Steps identified in the [Initial Summit Final Report](#)
- Continued engagement through future invitations for collaboration in Colorado either on initiatives or through joining the Workplace Conditions and Well-Being Taskforce.

Workplace Conditions and Well-Being Taskforce Specific Actions

The Schools and CPS remain committed, in collaboration together, to supporting changes to the pharmacy practice landscape in Colorado to improve workplace conditions and professional wellbeing of our current and future workforce. The schools will be maintaining liaison with the Workplace Conditions and Well-Being Taskforce to support their efforts and identify areas that can be readily addressed by the schools.

CPS maintains a [Workplace Conditions and Well-Being Taskforce](#) which meets twice a month with the mission to address workplace and well-being issues in Colorado and support all professionals. This is an important part of the strategic plan for CPS.

The Taskforce Goals for the Coming Year

- Continue to provide educational sessions on well-being and workforce at the winter and annual meetings
 - Potentially theme focused ie operations/technology for winter and training/best practices topics for annual meetings, respectively
- Check in with other states and nationally to see what initiatives they have undertaken regarding Workplace Conditions
- Initiate Workplace Conditions and Well-being Forums-semiannually; under discussion
- Survey Fall Summit attendees
 - Their progress since fall 2024 meeting
 - Solicit best practices for inclusion in future CPS newsletters
- Continue to work with the Schools of Pharmacy
 - Support for promoting the career of pharmacy
 - Possible alternative staffing opportunities

Upcoming efforts resulting from the CPS Final Report, The Fall Summit, and this Summit, include:

- CPS Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs, June 13 and 14, 2025
 - Update on continuing next steps from the TF and Resources available on the CPS

website

- June 14 @ 7:45 am – Presentation on De-escalation Techniques entitled An Angry Person Walks into a Pharmacy and Says: Strategies for Patient De-escalation

- Presented by:

- Arielle Reindeau, MS, BCBA, CBIS (she/her)
Neurobehavioral Rehabilitation Program Manager
Craig Hospital, Englewood, CO

The Taskforce Next Steps

- Continues to meet 2x/month on Friday mornings – *new members are always welcome!*
- Prioritize topics for inclusion at the winter and annual meetings based on the identified themes
- Develop the survey for fall summit attendees – prioritize generating action and gleaning best practices
- Continuing to
 - Liaise with the schools of pharmacy
 - Provide updates via monthly CPS newsletters

Appendix A: Frontline Summit Agenda



Frontline Workers Summit Agenda

February 27, 2025: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

A hybrid event held in person at Colorado's Health Capital and online via ZOOM

Facilitator: *Marta Brooks*

Speakers: *Sarah Bow and Tisha Smith*

Breakout Room Facilitators/Scribes: **TF Members** (Trevor Beutel, Kristin Holmes Lisa Nguyen, Stacia Rumer, Tisha Smith, Robert Willis)

7:00 – 7:15 pm

Participants log on and get settled, networking and dessert

7:15 – 7:25 pm

Introductions

10 mins

Marta Brooks to provide ground rules and invite introductions

- Safe Space, not being recorded, anonymous mechanism to share comments via QR code (pre-survey one; display it)

7:25 – 7:45 pm

Colorado Workplace Conditions / Well-being in Colorado overview

5 mins

Sarah Bow to officially welcome & open the meeting

15 mins

Tisha Smith to share results from the fall summit final report and the outcomes of the annual meeting.

7:45 – 7:55 pm

Open Forum / Ice Breaker

10 mins

Marta Brooks to introduce Word cloud activity

- What word(s) would you use to define your work environment pre-pandemic?
- What word(s) would you use to define your work environment now?

7:55 – 8:40 pm

Breakout Session (TF MEMBERS ASSIGNED)

45 mins

Guided questions:

- What has improved? Which solutions have been most impactful?
- What is still a problem? What is the biggest problem? Is it better or not?
- What are your suggestions / recommendations to keep moving the needle on improving? What is something your workplace has done that is positive

8:40 – 9:00 pm

Come back as a big group to share action steps

20 mins

- *Marta Brooks* to facilitate key points from each breakout room / group of individuals. **TF Members** should be ready to provide this information.

Appendix B: Frontline Summit Flyer

See Next Page

COLORADO PHARMACISTS SOCIETY PRESENTS

YOUR BOSS THINKS IT'S BETTER... DO YOU?

A Summit to Advance Colorado's Frontline Pharmacist and Technician Voices

REAL TALK: REAL SOLUTIONS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

7:00PM TO 9:00PM

IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM ALL PHARMACY
PROFESSIONALS ACROSS COLORADO!**

WHAT IT'S ABOUT

A safe space for pharmacists, technicians, and interns to discuss workplace challenges - no executive leadership present

EVENT DETAILS

Colorado's Health Capitol
303 East 17th Avenue
Suite 400
Denver, CO 80203

Can't make it in person?
ZOOM with us!

7:00PM - 7:15PM:
Check-in,
networking, and
desserts

7:15PM - 9:00PM:
Discussion

WHY ATTEND

Connect with peers,
share experiences, and
collaborate for a better
work environment!

CPS membership not required but always encouraged!

REGIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

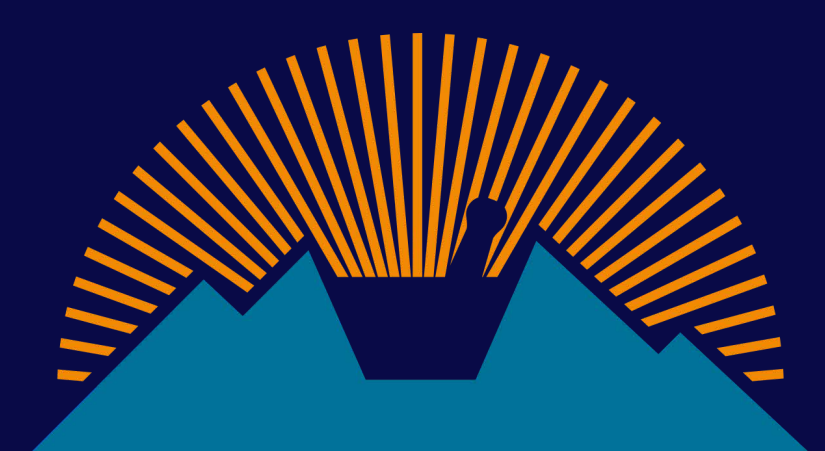
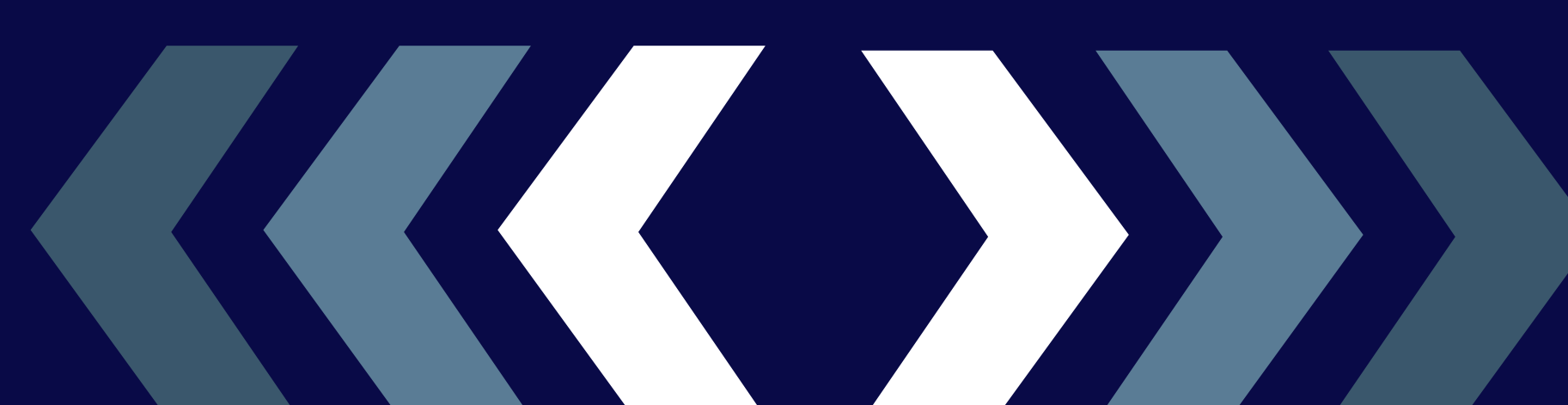
Skaggs School of Pharmacy
and Pharmaceutical Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Can't make it?

Share your voice and give us
feedback!

Register here!

<https://shorturl.at/nKiul>



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